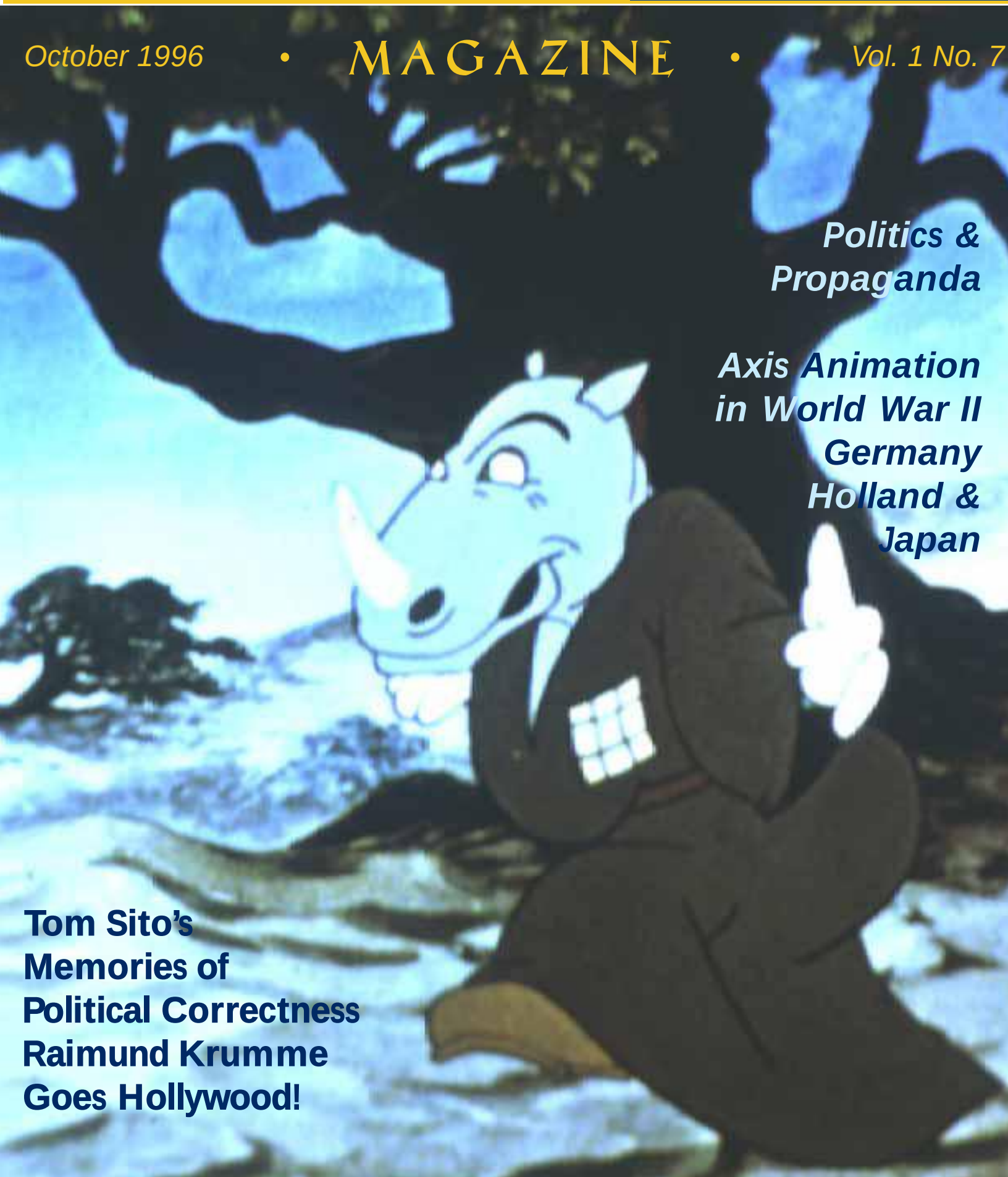
ANIMATION WORLD

October 1996 • MAGAZINE • Vol. 1 No. 7



Politics & Propaganda

Axis Animation in World War II
Germany
Holland &
Japan

Tom Sito's Memories of Political Correctness
Raimund Krumme Goes Hollywood!

Table of Contents

October 1996

3 Editor's Notebook *by Harvey Deneroff*

5 The Case of Hans Fischerkoesen
When Hans Fischerkoesen, Germany's leading producer of animated commercials, was ordered to make theatrical cartoons by the government in World War II, as William Moritz notes, he produced a trio of remarkable films which were not exactly Nazi propaganda.

11 Reynard the Fox and the Jew Animal
The Dutch film industry's most ambitious production during World War II was an anti-Semitic sequel to Reynard the Fox. Egbert Barten and Gerard Groeneveld detail the fascinating story behind the film's production.

16 Momotaro's Gods-Blessed Sea Warriors: Japan's Unknown Wartime Feature
Fred Patten takes a look at Japan's first animated feature, a propaganda tract made at the behest of the country's military government.

19 Fight To The Death, But Don't Hurt Anybody! Memories of Political Correctness
Tom Sito, fresh from his gig as head of story on Disney's Pocohantas, details his experiences over the years trying to be politically correct.

23 The Politics of Protectionism: The Cartoon Forum
Jill McGreal discusses the politics of funding for animation via the European Union's CARTOON initiative, which is trying to create the infrastructure for a transnational industry.

26 Leaving Home
Linda Simensky ruminates on the political and other consequences of changing jobs amidst today's boom times in the animation industry.

29 The View From Hollywood
Raimund Krumme, one of Germany's top independent animators who is now working on a feature version of a children's classic, talks about Hollywood and the challenges posed by his new project.

31 Icelandic Animation
Animation in Iceland is a relatively recent (and mostly hidden) phenomenon. Giannalberto Bendazzi provides an look at frame-by-frame filmmaking in the island nation.

35 Desert Island Series....The Pragmatic Voice of Kibitzing?!?, *compiled by Frankie Kowalski*
Tom Sito, June Foray and Bob Basler.

36 AWM Comics
Dirdy Birdy by John R. Dilworth

37 News

41 Next Issue's Highlights

1 Cover: *About Reynard the Fox* (Nederland Film, 1943), Courtesy of Edgar Barten

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

by Harvey Deneroff

Politics & Propaganda

The issue of politics and propaganda is for many people a peripheral issue at best when it comes to animation. Yes, politicians and educators may complain about the violence of many cartoons, but real hard core politics and propaganda is something best left to the denizens of live-action filmmaking. Yet, there has been a long, if not necessarily prolific history of animation filmmakers using the medium for political purposes of one kind or another.

One only has to recall such classics as Winsor McCay's anti-German documentary, Sinking of the Lusitania (1918) and Hugh Harman's anti-war cartoon, Peace on Earth (1939), which earned him a Nobel Peace Prize nomination, as well as the feature films of Quirino Cristiani profiled by Giannalberto Bendazzi in the July issue. But one of the least heralded uses of animation for political purposes was by the Axis powers during World War II. It is an oversight that we hope to partially remedy by a trio of articles exploring what was going on in Germany, Holland and Japan.

William Moritz's "The Case of Hans Fischerkoesen" provides a profile of one of Germany's finest animation filmmakers of the prewar period, who was conscripted into making theatrical cartoons. In so doing, Fischerkoesen avoided the blatant propaganda efforts of some of his contemporaries and opted for a series of subversive masterpieces: Weatherbeaten Melody, The Snowman, 1943 The Silly Goose.

Jimmy Murakami's Where the Wind Blows ... (TVC, 1968), based on Raymond Briggs' book, deals with the effects of nuclear war on an elderly British couple.

On the other hand, in Holland, the local Nazi Party backed a big budget sequel to the popular tale of Reynard the Fox with rather obvious anti-Semitic purposes. The film, About Reynard the Fox, was never released and was long thought lost until a fragment surfaced a few years ago. Egbert Barten and Gerard Groeneveld, in "Reynard the Fox and the Jew Animal," examine the story behind the film's creation and speculate on its ultimate fate.

Our rundown of Axis films concludes with Fred Patten's "Momotaro's Gods-Blessed Sea Warriors: Japan's Unknown Wartime Feature," takes a look at a film released in the waning days of World War II in an attempt to rally the home front.

On a more contemporary note, Tom Sito, in his rather irreverent "Fight To The Death, But Don't Hurt Anybody! Memories of Political Correctness," recalls his experiences in dealing with network standards and practices departments, studio psychologists and public pressure to be politically correct.

Meanwhile, Jill McGreal's "The Politics of Protectionism: The Cartoon Forum" examines the reality of the efforts to create a European industrial bases for animation via grants and other soft moneys, and whether this is the right way to challenge the hegemonies of the United States and Japan.

On a more personal level, Linda Simensky's "Leaving Home" deals with the everyday problems of changing jobs in animation, an

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Hugh Harmon's Peace on Earth (MGM, 1939), created a sensation with its anti-war message when it was first released in the US after the outbreak of World War II in Europe.

industry whose explosive growth has seen both artists and executive increasingly playing musical chairs.

Germany's Raimund Krumme, the award-winning independent animator, known for such films as Ropedancers and Crossroads, was recently hired to handle the animation on a live-action/animated feature version of Harold and the Purple Crayon. In "The View From Hollywood," Raimund takes a look at his new assignment and the nature of animation itself.

In our final feature article, Giannalberto Bendazzi takes a detailed look at "Icelandic Animation," past and present, profiling the three major filmmakers involved in producing animation in the sparsely populated Atlantic island nation.

In this month's "Desert Island" report, Frankie Kowalski asked a trio of animation types who have been politically involved inside and/or outside the animation industry. And finally, last but not least, is the latest installment of John R. Dilworth's epic adventures of "The Dirdy Birdy."

Harvey Deneroff
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***The Hand* (Czechoslovakia, 1965), Jiri Trnka's famed parable about tyranny and artistic freedom.**

The Case of Hans Fischerkoesen

by William Moritz

The following article is extracted from "Resistance And Subversion in Animated Films of The Nazi Era: the Case of Hans Fischerkoesen," that was first published the premiere issue of Animation Journal *(Fall 1992), which in turn was based on a paper presented by Moritz at the 1991 Society for Animation Studies Conference held at the Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York..*

After World War II started, the trickle of cartoons produced by German studios was not enough to cover the loss of Disney and other American product. To rectify the situation, in 1941 the Nazi government called for the establishment of a strong German animation industry capable of producing both color cartoons and animated features. Thus, all able animators were commanded to step up production and focus on theatrically viable cartoons. Among the filmmakers called into action was Hans Fischerkoesen, who was among the most distinguished animators remaining in Germany between 1933 and 1945, and whose work during the war years included a trio of remarkable films: Verwitterte Melodie (Weather-beaten Melody, 1942), Der Schneemann (The Snowman, 1943) and Das dumme Gänslein (The Silly Goose, 1944).

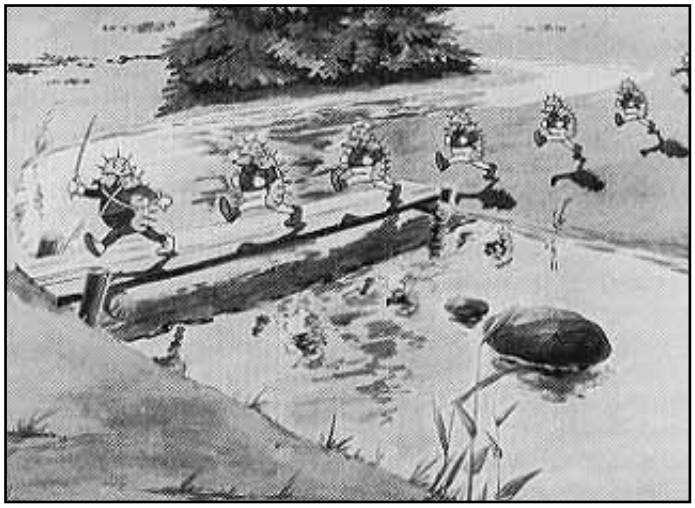
The cover of *Der Speigel* featuring Hans Fischerkoesen
Courtesy of William Moritz

Hans Fischer was born May 18, 1896 in Bad Koesen, near Naumburg of the famous cathedral, on the road between Leipzig and Weimar. Because "Fischer" was such a common name in the film world, he would later add on the name of his birthplace in order to distinguish himself from the others. He was a delicate child, plagued by asthma, so his parents allowed him and his sister Leni to indulge their taste for fantasy and spectacle by creating puppet shows and home entertainments. The two attended the Leipzig Art Academy together and Leni later worked with Hans on many films.

Because of his asthma, Hans could not serve as a soldier during World War I, but he did work in army hospitals near the front lines, where he experienced the grotesque inanity of trench warfare. He dreamed about making an animation film, Das Loch im Westen (The Hole in the West), which would expose the War Profiteer as the true cause of war—and the real manipulator of victory and defeat.

When the war ended, Fischerkoesen returned to his family home and spent months drawing about 1,600 sequential images that made concrete the dream (or rather nightmare) vision he had experienced in the trenches. He took the drawings to a Leipzig movie company and paid them (a borrowed) 700 marks to photograph them; but, as it turned out, the company was near bankruptcy and had never shot single-frame material before. Hans lost that money, but he persevered to build his own animation stand out of a wooden margarine crate and shot it himself. Fischerkoesen described the film as a political cartoon brought to life, and it certainly sug-

The very idea of ambiguity was anathema to the Nazis, who tried to enforce strict, unbending codes of behavior.



Hans Held's *Troublemaker*, a real Nazi cartoon.
Courtesy of William Moritz

gests something of Bertold Bartosch's *L'idée* (*The Idea*), made a decade later. Fortunately, a local distributor bought *Hole in the West* for 3,000 marks, so he could continue to make more films.

The Darling of Audiences

Fischerkoesen made a successful advertising film, *Bummel-Petrus* (*Strolling Peter, 1921*), for the Leipzig shoe factory Nordheimer, which led to a two-year contract with Julius Pinschewer, who had pioneered the use of animated commercials in movie theaters back in 1911. Afterwards, he established his Fischerkoesen Studio in Leipzig to specialize in advertising films, something Fischerkoesen seemed perfectly suited to. After all, he had an irrepressible sense of humor, a good sense of rhythm, and a charming, flexible cartoon style—as well as the obsessive concentration necessary to make animated films perfect in every way. He also had the knack for seeing a pun or twist in some old saying, common situation or popular song which would fit right in with a product. He philosophized about advertising, proposing the "if-then" formula (If you use this product, then this will happen; if you have this problem, then this product will help) as the best format for a succinct, cogent ad.

In 1931, a Leipzig newspaper celebrated Fischerkoesen, "the darling of audiences," with a full-page article entitled "Watch out, Mickey Mouse, Felix the Cat, and Co.!" which contains delightful images of a cow with a lyre built into her horns, a bull in a tuxedo, and an enchanting art deco-style kangaroo ballet—all popular cartoon figures from his ads. By 1937, when he won both first and second prizes at a Dutch-sponsored international competition for advertising films (the runners up included George Pal and Alexander Alexeieff), Fischerkoesen had made around 1,000 publicity films. Unfortunately, all but a few of these seem to be lost, or languish unidentified in collections that do not consider commercials important.

For many years, Hans Fischerkoesen managed to keep his production confined to the kind of advertising films he did so well. But after the 1941 edict, the Propaganda Minister demanded that he move his staff and studio to Potsdam, near UFA's Neubabelsberg studios, to be available for consultations and special effects on features and documentaries. When the 45-year-old Fischerkoesen, loathe to become any more closely involved with Goebbels than necessary, protested that he didn't really have the talent to invent ideas for story films, he was assigned to work with 35-year-old Horst von Möllendorf, a popular Berlin newspaper cartoonist who had just been "drafted" to work as a gag man for animated cartoons. (Although Möllendorff received story credit on several of Fischerkoesen's wartime films, his contribution was negligible: the credit for these films rests solely with Hans and Leni Fischerkoesen.)

Among the specific things that Goebbels mandated for the new German cartoon industry was the development of "three-dimensional" effects which could be competitive with the Fleischers' Stereo-Optical process (which combined model sets with cel animation) or Disney's multiplane camera (which filmed several layers of cels). Fischerkoesen

Weather-beaten Melody
Courtesy of William Moritz

had already been using a simple multiplane effect derived from the multilayered glass animations that Lotte Reiniger used in the 1926 animated feature *Die Abenteuer des Prinzen Achmed* (*The Adventures of Prince Ahmed,* 1926). Fischerkoesen had also been working with puppet and model animation, and could hardly have been ignorant of Oskar Fischinger's brilliant simulation of a deep-space traveling boom shot around the Muratti cigarettes parading towards the Olympic stadium in his classic 1934 ad film *Muratti Gets in the Act.*

Weather-beaten Melody

The opening sequence of Weather-beaten Melody (1942), his first film made under the government edict, demonstrates a bravura mastery of both the multiplane and stereo-optical processes—and a meaningful use of depth, following the flight of a bee down from the sky, through 12 layers of grass and flowers in a meadow, and circling around an abandoned phonograph which lies, puzzlingly for the bee, in the middle of the meadow. Behind this long point of view sequence is the assumption that the bee is a personage worthy of following, and in fact she turns out to be adventurous, resourceful, perceptive, talented, witty, and friendly, among other admirable, even noble "human" characteristics. Fischerkoesen demonstrates these traits in little episodes characteristic of his style: she uses dandelion seeds as parachutes for a joyous free ride; her game of tossing a blueberry ends in disaster (the overripe fruit bursts over her head), but she meticulously wipes herself clean on a daisy petal. He also delineates her personality with unexpected complexities. For example, is she jealous of the hedgehog who takes over her place as "phonograph needle" when she is away sharpening her stinger—or is she merely exasperated at the confusing quality of his multi-needle pickup? The very idea of ambiguity was anathema to the Nazis, who could only hope to maintain their fascist program by enforcing strict, unbending codes of behavior, and absolute, inviolable "ideals and truths." Precisely because of its technical brilliance, Weather-beaten Melody could get away with quite a bit of forbidden information.

The Snowman
Courtesy of William Moritz

Ironically, inherent in the "stereo" animation techniques, as Fischerkoesen uses them, lies the most subversive metaphor: a sense of freedom of movement, an affirmation of the multi-layered nature of reality—of ambiguity and change—which demands (even subconsciously) that the viewer think for herself and consider other things as valid as the subjective self—something truly forbidden by Nazi doctrine as the most dangerous action of all.

To fully appreciate Fischerkoesen's daring, one must remember that the Nazis had forbidden jazz and swing as an Afro-Judaic plot to undermine traditional German culture. The catalogue of the 1937 "Degenerate Film" exhibition contained an anti-jazz spread entitled "Africa Speaks...?," which stigmatized "Al Jolson-Rosenblatt" among other black and black-face jazz musicians, and the 1938 "Degenerate Music" catalogue featured the image of a black saxophone player wearing a Star of David. Detlev Peukert chronicles how the "swing movement" became a key symbolic rebellion, while the British film Swing Under the Swastika documents the sad and ironic fates of jazz musicians during this period.

In this context, the discovery of an abandoned phonograph takes on new meaning, especially when the record on the turntable is a swing number with lyrics that say, "The week wouldn't be worthwhile without a weekend when we can get away to enjoy nature." Near the phonograph lies an "abandoned" clasp from a woman's garter belt (with a lucky four-leafed clover growing out of it!), which suggests that the interrupted picnic that left behind the musical instrument had also involved erotic play—something also strictly forbidden by the puritanical Nazi codes. So from beneath the charming surface of this cartoon emerges a subversive message: women, far from the unnatural Nazi-designated stereotype of "children, church and kitchen," can escape into Nature to be self-reliant and adventurous, erotic and free—they can rediscover or revitalize a suppressed world of forbidden joy in music and friendship

between diverse creatures who may be brown or white, frog or caterpillar—or even a pair of ladybug beetles who may be a same-sex couple. Especially compared to the American cartoons of this same period (profligate with gratuitous violence and racist/sexist stereotype victims), the entire community of animals depicted in Weather-beaten Melody is peaceful, friendly, fun-loving, imaginative and altruistic—quite the opposite of the Nazi requirements for a dedicated Aryan citizen.

The Silly Goose
Courtesy of William Moritz

The Snowman

The same spirit of ambiguity and subversive subtext pervades Fischerkoesen's next film, 1943's The Snowman. The opening sequence, as in Weather-beaten Melody, establishes the filmmaker's bravura mastery of creating the illusion of three-dimensional space. Behind the credits, we see layers of snowflakes, with their elaborate abstract patterns (including pure geometrical circles—all of which justify "degenerate" abstract art as a natural phenomenon!), falling down through the frame. As the credits finish, the viewer flies down over a snow-covered twilight village, around the steeple of a church (a stereo-optical model), down to a snowman in an open space—just as if seen from a snowflake's point of view. This point of view is confirmed when snowflakes alight on the snowman in the pattern of a heart—suggesting that he is a creature of feelings, rather than a military/political figure (who would wear medals or insignia), or an ostracized victim (such as the Jews or gays who wore yellow stars and pink triangles). Unlike the opening of Weather-beaten Melody, which establishes the point of view as that of the protagonist bee, The Snowman's opening sets us up as a visitor/observer.

The snowman is a more complex and "humanly" equivocal character than the bee, and thereby makes us question the meanings behind the actions he is involved in—and ultimately the social context from which he comes. In his Aspects of the Novel, E. M. Forster discusses two principles of narrative organization which are particularly relevant to The Snowman. He points out that pattern, the audience's slow perception of an overall shape or direction to the story, can heighten our awareness of the inexorable conditions that produce the narrative "destiny," whether it be, for example, the traits of personality that cause a protagonist to succeed or fail, or the nexus of social conditions that bring together a diverse group of people to a particular time, place and incident. Forster also observes that rhythm, the regular recurrence of certain details, events or persons in a story, can cause us to reevaluate the meaning of both the repeating item and the narrative as a whole. Fischerkoesen employs both pattern and rhythm to make us consider seriously the plight and destiny of the snowman.

In the film's first episode, the snowman begins to play by juggling snowballs—a curiously appropriate pastime. His game angers a watchdog, and in his attempts to get away, squashes the dog into the snow and then laughs at its distress. When the dog then bites a chunk out of his rump, the snowman finally get rid of it by pelting it with snowballs.

Pure geometrical circles which justify degenerate abstract art as a natural phenomenon!

The snowman tries to have fun again by skating on an icy pond (using icicles for skates), but finds the three snowballs of his body beginning to bounce apart. Soon, the ice breaks and the snowman is melted down to a skeleton of his former self, but restores himself by rolling down hill until he regains his former bulk, only to have his torso and head get mixed up again. A crow helps reassemble his body. A tree laughs at him as he had laughed at the dog, so the crow shakes its coat of snow away as revenge. While the snowman tries to nap, a rabbit attempts to steal his carrot-nose. He decides to go inside to sleep where it will be safer.

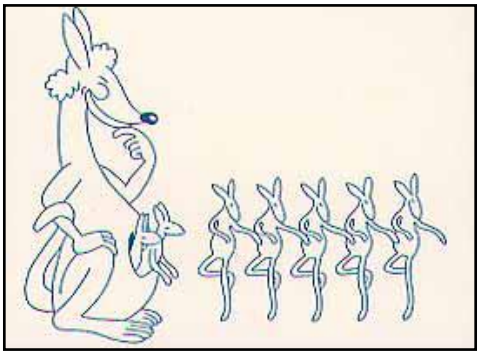
Scenes from postwar advertising films by Hans Fischerkoesen

As he walks into a cottage, the viewer is treated to a spectacular 180-degree stroll around the building, which recalls the brilliant opening shot of the city square. Once inside, he disturbs a grumpy cat in order to sleep on its couch, and the cat's huffy hiss reminds us of the petu-

lant, territorial dog's snappy barks. Increasingly, we become aware that (as the scoffing tree had recalled the scoffing snowman) events are beginning to parallel earlier ones— in fact, a "pattern" which contrasts the events in "Winterland" with those in "Summerland," and several "rhythmic" recurrences heightens our perception of the differences between these alternate worlds.

The snowman notices his own picture on the winter portion of the calendar, but also sees (on later months) some unfamiliar flowers. So, he decides to hide out in the refrigerator, so that he may reemerge when the flowers are in bloom. When he attempts to leave in July, however, his rump has stuck to the refrigerator shelf and he loses a chunk, which he regains by turning down the temperature in the icebox (an intelligent, ecological choice—also recalling his earlier ruse of throwing snowballs at the dog until the dog retaliated by tossing back his lost rump-chunk as a weapon). He plays pranks on the chicken and cows (just as he had teased the dog in Winterland), yet when he finds that he is freezing a ladybug, he kindly becomes a ski run for her by turning somersaults across a meadow—another dazzling animation feat. After he melts, singing "How lovely summer is; my heart breaks from happiness," the rabbit finally eats his carrot-nose (and her bunnies frolic in his hat as if he had been a magician).

Parallel incidents reveal the complexities of the snowman's character and assess the ambiguities of the action as a parable: the snowman, an average person with some good and bad qualities, is trapped in a given environment, Winterland. Although it is functional, it is cold and in some ways inhospitable. He reads that there is another place, sunny and free, and arranges to escape there for some thrilling moments of warmth and freedom, even at the cost of his life, as we hear him gurgle in the death throes of song, twisting and melting in the hot sun. The dog, crow, cat, ladybug, rabbit, and others are characterized as parallel human-like creatures, which supports an open, thoughtful humanitarian world view that was anathema to the Nazis. The Snowman is also full of beautiful, touching, affirmative and spectacular scenes, such as the long pan



Kangaroo Ballet from a pre-1931 advertising film made by Hans Fischerkoesen. Line drawings of the artist's work rendered by Geoffrey Anderson.

across unfolding spring.

The Silly Goose

Fischerkoesen's third wartime film, The Silly Goose (1944), provides another thought-provoking parable. Through the bars of a wooden cage on a cart going across town, a young goose glimpses the seemingly glamorous allures of city life: an exotic parrot, silhouettes in a dance hall, an elegant fox (stole) with feathers. Back at the farm, while her brothers and sisters receive their schooling in swimming, marching, laying eggs and such, she dreams narcissistically by a pond, swings on the gate like a parrot, uses the plough as a mirror, and creates for herself a pseudo-sophisticated costume by thieving and exploiting her neighbors: a caterpillar stole, a straw bottle-cover hat, pollen powder, a spider-web veil, cork high-heels, and pig-bristle eyelashes. Her sashay through the barnyard creates mixed anger and astonishment. The gander, however, chooses to woo her instead of her more modest sisters, although she rejects him and wanders off into the woods, where she is seduced by a fox. The fox's sinister lair is run by slave labor—a weasel cranking a spit, a cat on a treadmill that makes xylophone music with dangling bones—and a cage full of geese waits for slaughter. She manages to escape, and the barnyard animals cooperate to drive the fox away and free his victims.

While Silly Goose seems to satisfy Goebbels' dictum for "blood and soil" films that glorify German peasant life, Fischerkoesen creates a complex and ambiguous narrative that confuses and contradicts Nazi policy. The city is glamorous—especially as seen in a long stereo-optical, multiplane sequence from the goose's point of view—while the barnyard activities are quaint and confining. At the same time, the goose's exploitation of the barnyard for her costume is mean and thoughtless. When the goose is seduced by the fox, we momentarily hear a crypto version of the old (Yiddish) popular song "Bei mir bist Du scheen," and could think at first that the villain is being identified as

The film seems to satisfy Goebbels' dictum for "blood and soil" films that glorify German peasant life.

a Jew. Quickly, however, we see that just the opposite is true: the goose herself is being exploited. The fox is using her as he does various other

animals, which seems to allude to the Nazis' exploitation of the Jews, as slave labor and prisoners doomed to execution.

This subtext becomes even more obvious by comparison with two other German films of the period: Hans Held's 1940 Der Störenfried (The Troublemaker) (in which the fox is a simplistic villain, and the farm animals drive him away in specifically militaristic fashion) and Frank Leberecht's 1943 Armer Hansi (Poor Hansi) (where the gratuitous violence that drives Hansi the canary back home rivals the worst of Warner Bros., truly supporting a "blood and soil" ideal). Very much to the contrary, The Silly Goose warns against being seduced by the glamor of fascism, and encourages us to think carefully about home and the city and responsibility—to realize what happens to victims and to do something about it.

So, in these three cartoon masterpieces, we see how Hans Fischerkoesen demonstrated that even at the darkest, most menacing hours of human depravity, men of principle may resist by subverting, with subtlety, the rules and prejudices of the tyrant.

The Postwar Years

At the end of the war, the invading Russian troops arrested Fischerkoesen as a possible Nazi collaborator. Although he could prove that he was not only never a Nazi sympathizer but actually a member of an underground resistance group of artists during the war years, he was kept in Sachsenhausen concentration camp for three years before he was exonerated. During that time, he worked in the kitchen, and painted ironic, allegorical wall murals using vegetable caricatures, which are now preserved as a national historical monument.

As in great animal fables, these murals play out the daily trials and terrors of prison living, yet provide an ironical perspective by enacting these traumas through items that we would eat without a second thought. A parsnip inspects a carrot for "vermin" (i.e., a worm), while another parsnip stands by, sharpening his knife (surgical or punitive?): is it not absurd that parsnips should be in control of carrots, when they're clearly relatives? Another carrot gratefully showers under a plain faucet spigot, while potatoes, eager for a swim, peel off their own skins and dive into the soup. A procession of happy cucumbers carry a pumpkin on a palanquin, yet they also help each other to slice themselves away on a "kitchen guillotine." These (and other) paintings of Fischerkoesen provide a glimpse of humanitarian warmth in the grim camp where so many suffered and lost their lives.

By the time Fischerkoesen was finally released, he had shown that he was not a Nazi, but also that he was no communist; thus, he was not allowed to work privately on his own films, but only as a functionary on assignments in the state-controlled DEFA studios. Later that year, 1948, he and his family made one of those daring nighttime escapes from East Germany, carrying only a camera; he then reestablished his animation studio near Bonn in West Germany.

I have viewed 30 or so of his postwar advertising films and have found most to be witty, lively, graphically interesting, and memorably clever. Certainly, he received critical acclaim: by 1956, he had won major prizes at commercial film festivals in Rome, Milan (three times), Venice, Monte Carlo, and Cannes. He also appeared on the cover of the prestigious Der Spiegel, Germany's equivalent of the American Time magazine. Fischerkoesen continued to make advertising films until 1969, and died in 1973.

© William Moritz

Left: A carrot showering. Detail from Hans Fischerkoesen's murals at Sachsenhausen concentration camp.
Center: A potato "peels down" to get into the soup. Detail from Hans Fischerkoesen's murals at Sachsenhausen concentration camp.
Right: Parsnips inspect and "correct" carrots in a detail from Hans Fischerkoesen's murals at Sachsenhausen concentration camp.
Photos courtesy of William Moritz

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Reynard the Fox and ~ the Jew Animal ~

by Egbert Barten and Gerard Groeneveld

This article is adapted from "'Van den vos Reynaerde' (1943): How a Medieval Fable Became a Dutch Anti-Semitic Animation Film" that appeared in the Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television *(vol. 14, no. 2, 1994), which in turn was revised and translated from "Reynaert en het Jodenbeest" (Reynard and the Jew Animal), that appeared in* De Volkskrant, *May 25, 1991.*

In 1941, Nederland Film was set up in The Hague by a member of the NSB (Dutch National Socialist) party with the aid of the occupying Germans to make animated films with a Nazi point of view. Its most ambitious project was Van den vos Reynaerde (About Reynard the Fox), an outrightly anti-Semitic film, and one of the first animated color films made in Holland. However, Reynard was never shown publicly and in the turmoil of the war was lost; in 1991, a fragment of the film was unearthed in Germany, thus permitting us to get a closer look at this fascinating film.

"Even on his way home, Reynard succeeded in catching a fat hen. 'And it will always be that way.'" The final sentence of the Dutch novel, Van den vos Reynaerde, is just as innocent as the face of Reynard the Fox. This time, however, it is not Reynard who is the villain. Yes, he does steal a few chickens, but that's the way he is. Much worse is Jodocus, the rhinoceros, a cunning, money-grubbing animal who came from far away to settle in the land of the late King Nobel. His family has secretly followed him from the East and together they seize power, taking control of the money market and poisoning the people with strange new ideas. With their entrance, the decline of the empire begins.

Main title for *About Reynard the Fox*. (Nederland Film, 1943)
Courtesy Nederland Filmmuseum (frame enlargement Ole. Schepp).

Van Genechten's Tale

The book version of Van den vos Reynaerde, by the Flemish-born Robert van Genechten, is without doubt anti-Semitic. It is a plea for racial purity and for a so-called natural order, in which a powerful leader governs the people, and in which the Jews undermine those values. This sequel to the medieval fable, Reynard the Fox, was first published in 1937 in Nieuw-Nederland (New Netherlands), a cultural and political monthly of the NSB. In 1941, it was published as a book and distributed in The Netherlands and Belgium. Over the next few years, a small fortune was invested in an animated film version, a remarkable example of Nazi propaganda of the highest technical quality.

Van Genechten was born in 1895, in Antwerp, Belgium, where he studied law and began his political career in the Flemish Nationalist Movement. When Flemish activists were persecuted during World War I for their collaboration with the Germans, he fled to the neutral Netherlands, but was sentenced in absentia to eight

About Reynard the Fox (Nederland Film, 1943)

years in prison. He settled in Utrecht, where he established a law firm with A. J. van Vessem (who later won a seat in the Dutch Parliament for the NSB). In 1934, he became a member of the NSB (Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging = National Socialist Movement), led by Anton Adriaan Mussert, and distinguished himself as an editor of Nieuw Nederland. When the Germans invaded Holland in 1940, he was briefly imprisoned, only to be released after the Dutch Army capitulated. The NSB then rewarded him with the position of Procurator-General at the court in The Hague, and Mussert later appointed him Head of the Department of Socio-Cultural Training and of the Educator's Guild.

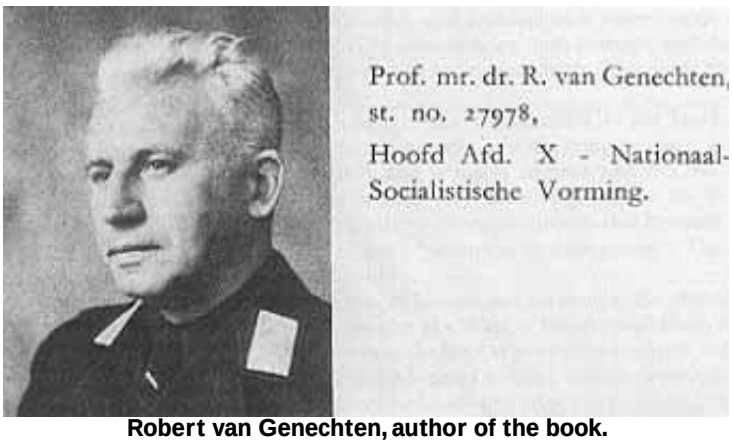
About Reynard the Fox takes place in Flanders (Belgium, where, after the death of King Nobel, a fierce power struggle takes place. Lionel the Lion, the king's young son, lacks the strength and knowledge to take his father's place, so the donkey Boudewijn usurps the throne.

While the animals argue whether or not Boudewijn is a legitimate successor to the throne, "a most peculiar animal that no one knew" announces himself: Jodocus, the rhinoceros. (The Dutch word for rhinoceros is neushoorn, which literally means nose horn; as to Jodocus, it should be noted that the Dutch word for Jew is jood.) He asks the donkey for a place in the empire. "I come from far away-countries," he says. "Everywhere I wandered and everywhere I was persecuted because unfortunately I applied myself to the cultivation of thistles. I breed a thistle variety of unknown fineness, but the envious people don't want to recognize me. Give me a modest little place in your empire, where I can modestly grow my thistles." Boudewijn agrees.

Soon after Jodocus' arrival, the old empire of King Nobel crumbles. The rhinoceros introduces new ideas and the natural order is drastically altered. A Republic is declared in which liberty, equality and fraternity exist. The people lose their heads at his talk. "There was no one who kept to the rules of the race. Rabbits crept into foxholes, the chickens wanted to build an eyrie." And all of this happened in the name of liberty.

Eventually, Jodocus manages to promote animal miscegenation. "Then there was a great confusion amongst the animals. They had become true brothers and mated amongst each other. The bull and the goat, the hare and the fish, the ferret and the wild boar; because they didn't recognize each other, and confused each other's names and habits, they ate their own children." The animals bring forth bastards, and that is just what Jodocus wanted, "because the bastard has no standards of his own, and is prepared to accept those of anyone."

The rhinoceros rapidly increases his power. The animals have to pay taxes and Jodocus appoints his relatives, whom he has secretly sent for from the East, as tax collectors. The country is going downhill and is totally covered with thistles. The animals become dissatisfied, especially because they learn of the better life in the Achterhoek (in the Dutch province of Gelderland). It was to this area that Reynard and his family had emigrated and lived "according to their nature," and where Leonard the Lion had also gone.



Robert van Genechten, author of the book.
Photo Groeneveld Collection, Rotterdam

Reynard lures the rhinos to the Court of Boudewijn by the promise of a hoard of tax revenue. Then, when they are gathered together, Lionel arrives at the head of a large animal parade. A great massacre occurs among the tax collectors and Jodocus is killed. Van Genchten notes, with regret, that, "in spite of

the preparations, some of them managed to escape and fled to other countries."

A glowing review of the book appeared in Volk en Vaderland, the national NSB weekly: "One cannot think of a better way of making propaganda than by making people laugh. That Van Genechten gave Van den vos Reynaerde so much real humor ... is a valuable asset for our political propaganda." With a year, the book was reprinted.

Because they didn't recognize each other, and confused each other's names and habits, they ate their own children.

From Book to Film

The success of the book in Dutch Nazi circles led to a decision by the Department of People's Information, Service and Arts (DVK), the Dutch version of Joseph Goebbels' Propaganda Ministry, to use it as the basis for the biggest production of the Dutch film industry during the war.

But there were other reasons. One is that the Germans were not satisfied with most of the animated films made in the Third Reich. The Nazis were charmed by Disney's films and what had been made before the war by the Pal Studio in Eindoven. In the 1930s, the Hungarian emigree George Pal made a series of beautiful puppet films advertising Philips' electronic products. Pal left for the United States shortly before the war, but many of his talented Dutch collaborators remained.

Nederland Film was created in early 1941, at the behest of the Germans, by Egbert van Putten (1899-1996), a member of the NSB living in Berlin. Van Putten had previously been financially involved in the famous pre-war Dutch avant garde Filmliga (Film League) movement. In 1934, he moved to Berlin and worked on a few German movies. In 1938, he distributed the Swedish anti-Semitic movie Petterson und Bendel in Germany. In short, he was a man with important contacts in Germany and within the NSB, which explains how he traveled from Berlin to the Netherlands with letters of reference signed by the German authorities that opened doors in the Netherlands, including the DVK. He concluded a contract for some movies with the DVK and invested his own money and that of the German dancer, Ilse Meudtner, his girl friend and future wife, in the venture.

From the start, the company had two units, both in the center of The Hague. One produced cultural films, in which propaganda for the New Order was covertly brought forward.

About Reynard the Fox (Nederland Film, 1943)

The second made animated films. Together with the NSB Film Service, the Profilti Studio and the Haghe Film Lab, Nederland Film became part of a flourishing film industry in The Hague during the war.

Part of the deal that Van Putten made with DVK was the Reynard project. It was originally intended to be about 10 minutes long with a budget not to exceed 30,000 guilders. By June 1942, twice that amount had already been spent. At the end of 1942, expenditures totaled 97,167 guilders—and the film was being expanded to 20 minutes. The final costs were certainly much higher.

Reasons and Explanations

According to Van Putten, the main reason for making this film—a project of considerable duration—was to prevent Dutch animators from being sent to Germany. This is only partly true, since the reason people in the film industry were temporarily free from working in Germany had a lot to do with the fact that Goebbels had declared the film industry to be kriegswichtig (war work). Whether these people worked in arms factories in Germany or in film production in their homeland made no fundamental difference to the German authorities. In the late summer of 1944 (when most animation production in The Hague came to a halt) some of Nederland's personnel were sent to Germany anyway. Some were forced to work in weapons' factories. Others—more lucky—were sent to film studios in Berlin and Vienna.

Some of those who worked on Reynard now claim that they were just simple employees who did not know what was going on. Only Joop du Buy, then 18 years old (who was sent to Germany in 1943 to work in a weapon factory) stated that, "Of course we knew what we were doing. In the studio, the rhinoceroses who were called Jodocusses in the film had a nickname: we called them 'Jew Animals.'"

Even the head of the Nederland animation unit, Hill Beekman, now says that he did not know much. He remembers that he accepted the film as an assignment, that the screen-

play had already been finished when he first heard of the project, and that Van Putten organized it. In other words, Beekman claims that he did not know what he was doing.

Actually, Beekman was better informed than that. Van Putten, the film's director, was often absent, as he frequently went on tour (as a kind of manager) with Isle Meudtner, a well known dancer who often performed for the German troops. According to Van Putten, his directing credit was in name only: "I had little to do with it, though I was responsible—the boys from the Pal Studio did it all by themselves." Beekman—one of the prominent members of the Pal Studio in Eindhoven before the war—must also have had an important say in the design of the characters, as he was the principal animator. All the animals were designed for the film. The black and white silhouette drawings that Maarten Meuldijk had made for Van Genechten's book lacked the depth need for animation and were certainly not suited for a color film.

Some of those who worked on *Reynard* now claim that they did not know what was going on.

Others working on the film included Jan Bouman and cameraman Józef Misik. According to one of the animators, André Holla (another ex-Pal artist), even the animation camera used in the Pal Studio was sent especially to The Hague for the film. Another member of the Nederland staff was Jan van Hillo, who became a star TV reporter after the war, well known for his interviews with the royal family. He also made a television documentary about the concentration camps, in which he interviewed victims at the site of the camp, who must have been ignorant of his wartime service.

To attract talented young people to the project, a drawing contest was held in the city of Haarlem in April 1942. The contest was directed by H.G. Kannegieter and included Beekman as a member of the jury. Thirty winners got a free course in animation at The Hague. In fact, they were hired to do the routine work.

The screenplay was probably written by the Dutch National-Socialist Henk Plaizier, who worked in the DVK's Press Section. The music was composed by Leo Ruygrok, an NSB conductor who also scored several documentaries for Nederland Film.

Work on the film was not exactly carried out in the utmost secrecy. While the press only mentioned the studio's "animation project," colleagues at other companies knew they were working on an anti-Semitic film. Marten Toonder—the most important Dutch comic strip artist, who worked on a major animated film for Germany's Degeto during the war—stated that "they worked on an anti-Jewish film with an awesome, incredible story."

From left to right: Egbert van Putten, director of *About Reynard the Fox*, his girlfriend Ilse Meudtner and Henrik Scholte, press chief of Nederland Film. R.J. Meijer, 1941.
Photo Barten Collection, Zaandam.

Not Politically Correct?

Judging from the surviving part of the film and the original screenplay, the film follows the plot of the book in most respects. One of the most striking elements is the role played by Reynard. In the film, he is the fascist hero who makes the other animals resist the Jodocusses. Almost absent in the script is Lionel the Lion. Some scenes, like the racial mingling of the animals and the exploitation by the rhinos have been enlarged and stressed. Nevertheless, the aim of the book and film remain the same: both are unmistakable pieces of anti-Semitic propaganda.

The film was finished in April 1943 and was screened for the crew and for its backers at the Asta cinema on Sunday morning, April 25. Many leading NSB officials were present. "It was black with NSB people," according to Holla. These dignitaries included Tobie Goedewaagen, Secretary General of DVK and, of course, Van Genechten. According to Van Putten, both were very happy with the final result.

However, the DVK's Propaganda Council was not completely enthusiastic about the film. The fox in particular posed a problem: "From a National-Socialist point of view ... this character was not chosen correctly." (Apparently, the German authorities also had some problems with the film.) On the other hand, the Council praised it for its technical excellence

and for its "magnificent" drawings.

About Reynard the Fox was never released, which seems strange after so much money was lavished on its production. Why it was never shown publicly is still a mystery. Perhaps the objection to the fox's character was so great that the Dutch National-Socialist Party and the DVK decided not to screen it. Believing in Reynard's positive characteristics may have been difficult, as foxes have traditionally been stereotyped in animated films as untrustworthy characters. How can the prototype of the "bad guy" suddenly turn into a "hero"?

About Reynard the Fox (Nederland Film, 1943)

Perhaps the delay in finishing the film meant that such ferocious anti-Semitic propaganda was no longer deemed necessary. By 1943 most Dutch Jews had already been deported. The "Great Propaganda Action" against the Jews was over by 1941, so maybe the film was completed too late to be useful. Also, *Reynard* seems to offer an intellectual kind of anti-Semitism that was perhaps too abstruse for most filmgoers.

No documentation has been found to support either of these hypotheses. It is known, however, that some other films made by Nederland were also never released. In wartime Holland, it was not altogether uncommon that expensive and ambitious propaganda films found no audience. One related consequence was the rapid liquidation of the studio's animation unit after the film's one screening. Beginning in June 1943, the animators who worked for Van Putten were put into two newly-formed Dutch units of German studios: Bavaria Filmkunst and Fischerkösen, each of whom had bought a part of the company from Van Putten. In a letter, Van Putten complained that his anti-Semitic film could not be completed according to the wishes of the German authorities because, contrary to promises made when the two German enterprises started their business in The Hague, the new studios refused to cooperate.

Van Putten said that he took the only print of the film to Berlin, where he gave it to the widow of German film director Edgar Beyfus. (Van Putten and Beyfus had made a film together before the war.) The negative remained at Geyer-Werke, in Berlin, one of two labs in Europe that could process color film.

The section of the film (which lacks sound) acquired by the Dutch Film Museum came from Germany, where it had been stored at the Budesarchiv. This incomplete internegative (the first of possibly two reels of picture only) of *Reynard,* consists of the credits, the introduction of the principal characters and the beginnings of the anti-Semitic plot.

In spite of its rather crude anti-Semitism, the film, from a technical point of view, is very well made and a prime example of high quality Dutch animation: the animals move naturally and the well-preserved col-

They worked on an anti-Jewish film with an awesome, incredible story.

ors are magnificent. The first movement of the animals comes as something of a surprise, since they do not move when they are first introduced. (This kind of introduction resembles the way in which actors and characters were sometimes introduced in films of the silent era.) From a technical point of view, the Reynard film might well be associated with the Disney film made in the same period, also about animals, but with a rather different plot: the touching film in which a mother elephant teaches her son to take his first steps.

Egbert Barten is a film historian who has published extensively on the Dutch film industry in the 1940-45 period, and is currently finishing a book with Mette Peters on Dutch animated films in the 1940-44 period. Gerard Groeneveld teaches at the International School of Economics Rotterdam, and is the author of Nieuwe boeken voor den nieuwen tijd *(Amsterdam, 1992), a study of the first Dutch National Socialist publishing company, De Amsterdamsche Keurkamer.*

Momotaro's God-Blessed Sea Warriors:

Japan's Unknown Wartime Feature

by Fred Patten

World War II is now over 50 years in the past. For animation fans, those days can be relived every time a retrospective screening of wartime cartoons is held. There seems to be a campus or a fine-arts program every few years in most cities. It's an opportunity to see Confusions of a Nutzy Spy, Der Fuehrer's Face, Tokio Jokio, Bugs Bunny Nips the Nips, You're a Sap, Mr. Jap, and those other classics that grow more embarrassing as wartime memories fade.

The Japanese also made many propaganda cartoons, including one notable 37-minute featurette and a 74-minute feature. Unlike the American films, these have not been continuously available over the past half-century. Due to wartime Japan's own cannibalizing of film prints to reuse the film stock, and the destruction by the American Occupation authorities of all propaganda materials that could be found, most of the wartime cartoons were thought to no longer exist. However, the earlier film has been preserved by Tokyo's National Film Center while at least one print of the feature also survived. Today, thanks to the home-video in Japan, the latter is available to a much larger audience than ever saw the original film. It is too primitive to be of much interest to the fans of modern action-adventure Japanese anime, but it is fascinating to anyone with a serious interest in World War II propaganda art and animation, and in the evolution of anime.

Before World War II there were no animation studios in Japan. There were individual enthusiasts who would personally create a short film every year or two. Not all of these were cartoon animation. Cutout silhouette animation, inspired by Lotte Reiniger's 1926 Die Abenteuer des Prinzen Achmed, was very popular with some artistic hobbyists. The major Japanese film studios and theatrical distributors were happy to pick up these shorts. Some of the studios even subsidized the more reliable animators.

The characters are cute animals with the look of plush nursery toys.

Mituyo Seo and Momotaro

All film production was tightly controlled by the military-dominated government during the war (which started for Japan in 1937 in China). This ironically turned out to be very good for animation, because the Japanese Navy felt that theatrical cartoons were an ideal medium to instill the patriotic spirit in children. Effective production could not be handled by individual artists, so the first animation shop was organized under Mituyo Seo, who was born in 1911 and who had made more than a half-dozen short cartoons during the 1930s. Seo and a small staff created the 37-minute Momotaro no Umiwashi (Momotaro's Sea Eagles), which was released on March 25, 1943. Momotaro is a popular Japanese fairy-tale boy-hero, roughly similar to Jack the Giant-Killer in Western folklore. In this featurette he is portrayed as a young naval commander leading a squadron of funny-animal monkey fighter pilots (his "sea eagles"). This was popular enough with the public that the government authorized Seo to produce a feature-length sequel. Momotaro Umi no Shimpei (roughly Momotaro's God's-Blessed Sea Warriors), 74 minutes long, was released by Shochiku, one of Japan's largest film companies, on April 12, 1945. This is the feature that has been available on a Shochiku home-video cassette off and on since 1984.*

American wartime cartoons were made for family audiences with much adult-oriented political satire. But Momotaro Umi no Shimpei was clearly designed primarily for young children. The characters are cute animals with

the look of plush nursery toys. They play their roles with a minimum of dialogue, almost pantomime, to a choral accompaniment of lullaby-like songs and simple martial melodies.

The opening sequence (16 minutes) shows four young animals (a bear cub, a monkey, a puppy and a pheasant) in sailor dress uniforms walking along a country road into a forest, where they meet their friends and families. They have just completed their training and are saying their farewells before shipping out. There are tearful partings and a happy send-off party. The monkey's little brother plays with his sailor's cap, which is blown into a swift river. The infant falls in while trying to retrieve it, and is rescued by all the animal children acting cooperatively just before he is swept over a waterfall.

The continuity jumps abruptly to a large South Pacific island which is a composite of Borneo, Indonesia and New Guinea. Rabbit sailors of the Imperial Navy are clearing the jungle to construct a base and airstrip. (Aside from the four animal buddies who are meant to stand out as individuals, the mass of the Japanese Navy is portrayed as bunnies or monkeys.) They are watched in wonderment by the native jungle animals, who come out and help. The scenes are brief but detailed enough that they could almost serve as a training film on how to build a tropical base. The airstrip is barely completed when transport planes arrive bringing troops (which include the four buddies). Finally a VIP plane lands and Commander Momotaro (the only human, a young boy in officer's uniform) steps out.

The next few scenes depict the joys of naval life. The puppy begins a language class to teach Japanese to the friendly natives; everybody sings a peppy nursery-school A-E-I-O-U jingle to teach A-Sa-Hi ("Rising Sun"). We see wash day, getting mail from home, athletic military exercises, and the Japanese sailors marvelling at the Equatorial tropical climate.

Momotaro's Sea Eagles
Courtesy of Fred Patten

Why We Fight

The mood turns dramatic. A reconnaissance plane brings aerial photographs of an entrenched British colonial base on the other side of the island. The sailors switch from general combat practice to parachute training. The monkey, bear cub and puppy join the parachutists, while the pheasant becomes a fighter pilot. Commander Momotaro completes his plans. A rather artistically-jarring "why-we-fight" history lesson in cut-out silhouette animation shows 17th-century Dutch "pirates" conquering the independent Malay sultanates and imposing European rule over the East Indies. The sailors don their paratroop gear and board the transport planes. After a flight through a storm a British base comes into sight. The troops parachute out and capture it after a violent but brief battle. Commander Momotaro presides over the surrender conference, where the cowardly British officers each try to avoid taking the responsibility for signing the surrender. (The British voices sound authentic—inmates of a prisoner-of-war camp?—speaking in English with Japanese subtitles, in the feature's only major scene with considerable dialogue.) The ending shows the animal civilians back home getting the news of the Navy's victory, while children play at being paratroopers and jump down upon an outline map of the United States— presumably suggesting the next goal; but since this movie was released barely four months before the war's end, this must have been too exaggerated for even wishful dreaming by then.

Momotaro Umi no Shimpei is a black-&-white film, about technically equivalent to the American theatrical cartoons of the early 1930s. The art style and direction show a greater Chinese than Western influence. The film is extremely slow paced, and there are many "artistic" shots emphasizing the beauty of falling rain, or comparing parachuting sol-

diers with drifting dandelion seeds.

But while the story is more dramatic than those of America's cartoon comedies, the movie is about equal in racial stereotyping. The animals that depict the Japanese are all handsome and intelligent. The East Indies animals, although friendly, are carefree "happy but simple natives" (including a humorously grotesque proboscis monkey, an orangutan and a long-armed gibbon, in ethnic dress) who caper about foolishly. They are treated in a clearly patronizing manner by the sailor animals. The British are drawn as humans but with exaggerated Western characteristics: they are either tall and gangly or short and Colonel Blimpishly stout, with pop eyes and great noses. They also each have a single demon's horn on their heads: foreign devils. If our own propaganda cartoons look embarrassing to us today, we can take relief in the knowledge that ours weren't any worse than were the Axis'.

There are many artistic shots emphasizing the beauty of falling rain, or comparing parachuting soldiers with drifting dandelion seeds.

**According to History of Japanese Animation Films (a booklet published by an early Japanese animation magazine, Film 1/24, Tokyo, June 1977; co-edited & translated by Edward D. Herscovitz), Mituyo Seo was born on September 26, 1911. He created eight short anime films between 1933 and 1939; he directed the two Momotaro films released in 1943 and 1945. His final film, a musical featurette, Osama no Shippo (The King's Tail), was released in 1947. He then became an author and illustrator of childrens' books, and was apparently still active in this field in 1977.*

Fred Patten has written on anime for fan and professional magazines since the late 1970s. He currently writes a regular anime column for Animation Magazine. *An earlier version of this article appeared in* Get Animated! *(January 1986).*

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Fight To The Death, But Don't Hurt Anybody!

Memories of Political Correctness

by Tom Sito

When Americans debate censorship, one issue that makes all sides of the political spectrum see red is children's programming. This issue has been around long before the term "Political Correctness" was coined. Public outcries by the part of the public from time to time even arouses the government to action; for instance, when the 1954 Kefauver Hearings on Juvenile Delinquency in the US Senate attacked comic books and, despite the testimony of Bill Gaines, Walt Kelly and Al Capp, 300 comic book titles went under. Because animation is seen as a children's medium often best suited for babysitting, we in the industry seem an easy target for modern day Catos to score points.

He-Man **storyboard staff at Filmation, 1983. Front Row: Tom Sito, Steve Hickner, Richard Chidlaw, Don Manuel, Tom Tataranowicz and Bob Arkwright. Back row: Rob Lamb, Warren Greenwood, Mike Swannigan, Bob Forward, Brian Chin, and Victor Dalchele.**
Courtesy of Tom Sito

Kidvid is actually a phenomenon that began in the 1950s. After all, the classic Bugs Bunny and Tom and Jerry cartoons were not made for children, they were made for adults. When the movie studios unloaded their libraries of old shorts to television, local stations ran them endlessly in various children's slots. Growing up around 1960, you could turn the dial from Tom Terrific and see some pretty strange stuff: Popeye pounding some buck-toothed Japanese stereotype in a wartime propaganda cartoon, or blackface characters with Rochester and Steppin Fetchit voices. I remember Betty Boop leading a horde of lascivious males slobbering after her into a tent where they emerged as soldiers. What was acceptable in 1942 and ignored in 1962 is now and should be anathema.

Ariel's clamshell top was restrictive, sexist and suggested S&M.

Rotting Children's Minds

However, I cringe whenever Peggy Charen, of Action for Children's Television, or some other politico complains that children's minds are being rotted by cartoons, while shows like Mr. Roger's Neighborhood or Sesame Street are touted as being infititely more desirable. While I agree with their motives (heck, as a child I too would occasionally enjoy watching an arrested adolescent with a folk guitar singing "Puff the Magic Dragon" to a sock puppet), I just wish they wouldn't damn our medium along with the message.

Ms. Charen may think of animation

in the abstract, but I know that she's talking about the incomes of 2,500 American union artists and their families in L.A. alone. Not elves in trees, not pornographers in basements, just plain folks who make car payments and buy insurance and go on unemployment. Young wage earners who do storyboards for Batman, older pensioners who did Crusader Rabbit and Touché Turtle, and top animators who did Ariel, the Genie and Simba.

True, some of us are getting publicity about the big salaries we're earning with the current animation craze, but it still doesn't amount to the amount of tax withheld on Tom Arnold's wages. You don't become an animator to get rich, you do it because you love the medium, and you love the bright smile that crosses a child's face when you tell him or her what you do, or when you sit in a dark theater full of people you'll never know and watch them forget their cares and laugh at your drawings. I was an animator before this boom happened, and I'll be one when it subsides.

In 1966, the government intervened and stopped shows like Linus the Lionhearted, because the characters were also featured on Post Alpha-Bits cereal. The feds ruled children's advertising and programming should be separate. Well, in the Age of Reagan that law went in the dumpster and shows based on toy lines were planned and unleashed with the preciseness of the Normandy invasion. In all the current posturing and chest-thumping about how many times a minute Donald Duck gets hit with a mallet, the issue of exploiting young consumers is being obfuscated.

Still, I can't really protest too much; from 1983 to 1987, I made a living off those shows. I worked on He-Man, She-Ra, Go-Bots, Robotix, Donkey-Kong, Pitfall, Q-Bert, Galtar and dozens more I can't remember. After a recession and failed strike, which became an excuse for my employers to send most of my work overseas to be done by Third World political prisoners, it was good to be paying the bills. My wife Pat and I jokingly called our first house Casa de He-Man.

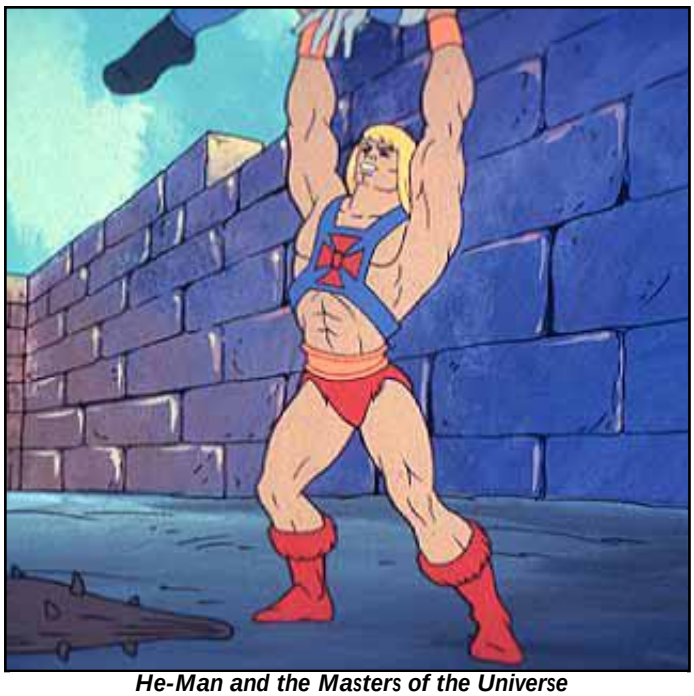
"I'm sorry, but He-Man cannot kill a tree."

And although the current perception may be that those studios never gave a flying figgy about children's gray matter, I know from being inside that we had a host of groups driving us nuts.

Standards and Practices and ...

Besides the standard and practices people at the networks and the sponsors, at Filmation we had a child psychologist on staff. Thus, I would have He-Man rip a tree out of the ground to beat some monster over the head and I would get a pink memo from Dr. Berry stating that, "I'm sorry, but He-Man cannot kill a tree." Guards zapped by the bad guy had to appear stunned, not look dead. Filmation president Lou Scheimer was proud of the fact that you never saw He-Man or She-Ra actually chop or stab anyone with their swords. He-Man's standard way for getting rid of bad guys was to spin them around until they were dizzy, then chop a cord that dropped some drapery on them, or throw them several miles where they landed harmlessly in some bales of hay. One of my favorite lines of dialogue was when King Randor had to exhort his legions to hurl back an invading horde of goblins: "Men of Eternia! Fight to the death, but don't hurt anybody!"

I remember being called to an important summit at Hanna-Barbera over the new season of The Flintstone Kids. When I arrived, all the senior writers and directors where there—Bob Taylor, Alex Lovy, Iwao Takamoto and Kay Wright. I thought, "Wow, serious stuff!" Then Joe Barbera introduced this group of young corporate psychologists, who preceded to lecture us all on Fred and Barney's personalities based on a system of color cards—"Is Wilma an Orange regressive or a Blue?" First of all, unless you lived in a cave since 1960, you probably know Fred Flintstone's personality; but then to lecture the very men who created him was incredible. I



He-Man and the Masters of the Universe
© Filmation, Courtesy of Jerry Beck

looked over at Mr. Barbera and noticed he was standing anxiously in the doorway, like he didn't want to be there. I guess this was some bright idea of a network sponsor and we had to cooperate.

Ms. Charen and members of Congress would be surprised if they could see how we used to jump whenever we'd get a letter from some group saying they disapproved of the way we portrayed Left-Handed-Vietnam-Vets-With-Reading -Disabilities, or whatever.

Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids
© Filmation

Lou Scheimer would say, "Guys. We gotta think about this!"

Of Clamshells and Mothers

The Disney Studio is also not immune to these kind of letters, and we always used to share the kookiest ones. My favorite came after the release of The Little Mermaid, when we got a missive from a nudist colony objecting to Ariel's clamshell top. They said it was, "Restrictive, sexist, suggested S&M and she couldn't check herself for breast cancer." When we got attacked for the portrayals of Arabs in Aladdin, the funny thing was most of the incidental characters were caricatures of us, the artists. I guess we look funnier than we thought. After The Lion King, someone accused us of making the bad guys minority voices and the heroes Wasp. I think that must have been a surprise to Robert Guilliame and James Earl Jones, African-Americans who played Rafiki and Mufasa, and Jeremy Irons who played Scarr.

I was head of story on Pocahontas and attended a special meeting called because Michael Eisner wanted to know why Pocahontas did not have a mother. After many drafts of such a challenging script, adding such a major character would've caused heavy disruptions in production. But that wasn't the main reason we aced Poca's mom. Contrary to the popular verdict that we ignored history on the film, we tried hard to be historically correct and to accurately portray the culture of the Virginia Algonquins. We consulted with the Smithsonian Institution, a number of native American experts, Pocahontas' descendants, the surviving Virginia tribes and even took several trips to Jamestown itself. And to any naysayer, I can produce a prodigious bibliography at practically a moment's notice.

The reason Pocahontas doesn't have a mom in the film is that her father, Mamawatowick (Chief) Powhatan, was polygamous and had 149 wives. It seems he would marry one, make a child and after the baby was weaned, would marry the mother off to another chief or warrior; this enabled him to maintain his control of the tribe through a system of dynastic alliances. Pocahontas herself probably didn't see her mother that much. The fact that, of all of his children, this little girl was closest to his heart speaks volumes. The issue of the single parent Disney hero or heroine was and still is a problem, but it is never far from the artist's minds.

It's possible that John Smith's "execution" was just a ceremony granting royal protection.

We knew the Pocahontas story would be a tough one to tell. We weren't just stretching a fairy tale, it was based on historical fact. While there were people in graves who did these things, there were precious few eyewitness chronicles to these events. Every expert would begin his or her statement of fact with, "We believe" or "We think that..." All we really know is that Captain John Smith went off on a trading mission from the Jamestown beachhead just before Christmas 1607 and disappeared for two weeks; when he returned, he had a good working relationship with the Indians and Chief Powhatan's

Pocahontas
© Walt Disney Pictures

daughter. Fourteen years later, in England, he wrote down the story of his capture, of his almost being killed and Pocahontas' interceding to save him in front of her father's court. Given that he could not speak Algonquin, it is quite possible that his "execution" was just a ceremony granting royal protection. We'll never know for sure. John Smith was basically a social climbing mercenary who would go on adventures, and then publish a heavily embellished book about it.

If we want to be absolutely historically accurate, do you know what happened to the real Sir John Radcliffe? When the Indians captured Smith, he was nailed to a tree and skinned alive. That would have been a choice Disney moment. Maybe a good song sequence.

Yet, we got attacked for not being accurate. Funny that, at the same time, a low budget competitor put on video a Pocahontas knockoff done in Korea that blatantly violated the story. It has Poc and Smith going to London, meeting the King and returning to Virginia to marry and live happily ever after. And nobody complained.

These issues of what's politically correct, I guess, will always be with us, as they should. We like to say that television or films should where children should find their values and history, but it would be naive to think that they don't. We have become a cinema literate society. One hundred years ago, you could say to someone raised on the McGuffey Reader and the classics, "I await not unlike Cinncinnattus at the Plow!," or "I weep the tears of Niobe" and they would be readily understood. Today if you say "I'm Spartacus!," or "Rosebud's the sleigh!," people react with equal recognition. I guess my only thought to add to the debate is, don't think we ignore our responsibilities to the public. We do take all these concerns very seriously; however, once again, don't damn the medium with the message.

Tom Sito is an animator at DreamWorks and is President of the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Union (IATSE Local 839), in North Hollywood. He can be reached via email at Sitokhan1@aol.com.

The Lion King
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The Politics of Protectionism: The CartOOn Forum

by Jill McGreal

The Seventh Cartoon Forum has just ended. This year it took place in the Connemara Coast Hotel, overlooking Galway Bay, home of wild salmon, oysters and Guinness. The sun shone on the 500 delegates, a mix of producers, broadcasters, international distributors, video companies, merchandisers, investors and VIP observers.

This event has become the single most important annual event both for the producers of children's animation, the sellers, and the program investors and buyers. It's organized by CARTOON, part of MEDIA II (Measures to Encourage the Development of the Industry of Audiovisual Production), the European Union organization which funds and supports all aspects of film and television production in Europe. The Forum is a private event to which every delegate is invited either by virtue of being an investor in European children's programming, or by being a producer with a project which has been selected for presentation.

The event has now become so successful that it engenders an air of privilege amongst the delegates and a feeling of exclusion amongst the rest. The situation is heightened by the discretionary powers that CARTOON exercises over its right to invite or exclude a certain category of investing organization—for instance, the American-owned companies with European satellite offices like Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network, Disney, Fox, Warners, etc. This year Janie Grace, one time invitee in her capacity as Controller of Children's Programmes at Meridian Broadcasting, now Chief Executive of Nickelodeon's UK office, was excluded. She came anyway under the BSkyB umbrella. John Coates, Managing Director of TVC, was excluded because he had no project to present this year, but slipped through in his capacity as Honorary President of the UK International Animation Festival. So the event acts as a powerful magnet within the professional animation community.

***64 Zoo Lane*, from the pilot film directed by An Vrombaut, a Belgian filmmaker who lives and works in London, produced by Zoo Lane Productions, 1994.**

The Centre's distance from the real business of television is hurting small companies.

Once-in-a-Lifetime Moments

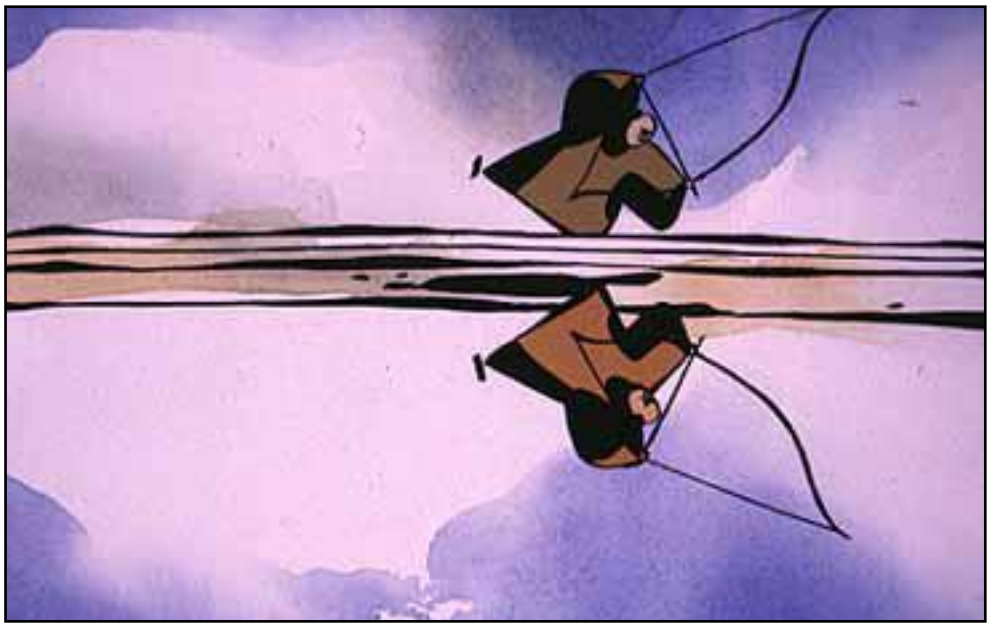
So what's the attraction? If a project is selected for the Forum, then the producer is given the opportunity to present that project at an appointed time and venue during the Forum to an assembled audience of investors from all over Europe. It's the "once-in-a-lifetime" moment for any project. For the buyers, it's an equally unmissable opportunity to compete for the best European projects of the year. The presentations are highly charged events. The big ones attract audiences of 100 or more people. The producers, who are often accompanied by their creative teams, are nervous and excited. The buyers hide their interest behind tight lips and feigned nonchalance. Afterwards, there is a chaotic rush to arrange meetings and do impromptu deals.

Many of the projects that are select-

ed for the Forum have already received pre-production aid from CARTOON. This twice-yearly competition awards funding in three categories: graphics, script and pilots. The top award is 40,000 ECUs (the European currency unit) and the decisions are made by juries comprising makers and buyers. From the seller's point of view the importance of this funding source is that it enables the small producer to stay independent of investors who are hungry for equity. A tiny investment at an early, and therefore risky, stage of development can often secure a disproportionate slice of equity. From the buyer's point of view it means that the risk of investing too early in a project which is unrealizable is minimized if producers can afford to develop their projects to a professional standard.

CARTOON runs other major programs, including training schemes and the studio grouping scheme. Under this latter scheme, European companies are encouraged to come together in joint ventures for which the successful applicants receive subsidies with which to attend markets, produce promotional material and administer co-productions. Last, but certainly not least, CARTOON runs the Cartoon D'Or (The Golden Cartoon), a prize worth 35,000 ECUs which is awarded yearly at the Forum to the best European animated film, an amount which the filmmaker must commit towards a new project. This year the Cartoon D'Or was awarded to Tyron Montgomery for his outstanding first film, *Quest.*

Its policies are openly projectionist and designed to provide a ready supply of indigenous product.



***Le Moine et le Poisson* (*The Monk and the Fish*), winner of the Cartoon DíOr in 1995, directed by Michael Dudok de Wit, a Dutch filmmaker who lives and works in the UK. Produced at Folimages in France, 1995.**

Promoting European Animation

CARTOON's mandate is to create a European industrial base for animation. Its policies are openly projectionist and designed to provide a ready supply of indigenous product for European television screens and to promote European animation within the competitive international television market. For "international" read American, although CARTOON's policies are not so much anti-American as pro-European—there is a difference. CARTOON has been very successful. Their Appraisal 1988-1995, published at the close of MEDIA I, reports on the facts and figures: an increase of 50% over 5 years of European series being broadcast on European television, an increase in annual production to 700 hours from 60 in 1986, the beginning of long format series production, something that was inconceivable in 1988, and so on.

Fortunately for CARTOON the business environment has also changed and the amount of available resources has kept pace with the increased number of projects looking for funding, although whether this is a direct effect of CARTOON's actions is moot. It could just be a global recognition of the potential value of children's programming, without which all of CARTOON's most strenuous efforts would not have yielded the same spectacular results. But the counter-argument could run something like this: local broadcasters have a choice of acquiring or commissioning product for their schedules. It's cheaper to acquire, but it's potentially lucrative to invest in product where the back end earns money from several revenue streams. It's unlikely that local broadcasters would have an opportunity to invest in foreign (American) projects where the sale of equity begins and ends in the foreign domestic market. But if a local broadcaster is offered local projects which are of a high enough standard to compete internationally for revenues from sales, video, merchandising, etc., then that local broadcaster is more likely to want to invest in those local projects.

The big money comes from merchandising, a fact which every parent will instantly appreciate. But it's a fact that of any 10 programs being scheduled at any one time in the UK, less than half will be British and only one of them will achieve any merchandise success at all. In the video retail stores 68% of sales are Disney titles and the rest of the shelf space is purchased by the companies with the biggest marketing spends. British titles may find their way into a grubby little space on the bottom shelf behind the pillar.

CARTOON is trying to rectify this imbalance but in the international market, where business rather than program making drives the decisions, supply and demand is either determined by genuine children's preferences, or overdetermined by marketing and promotional hype. Either way, no amount of dumping of unwanted or unsupported product in the marketplace will affect the patterns of purchase.

64 Zoo Lane: A Case Study

CARTOON's projectionist policies, then, only go so far. At some point, the product has to go it alone in the open market. In this tough place there are many other agendas and

It engenders an air of privilege and a feeling of exclusion.

different kinds of politics. In the UK at the moment the situation is unusually fraught and my own project, *64 Zoo Lane,* is caught up in it. *64 Zoo Lane* is a series for younger children created by the award-winning director of *Little Wolf,* An Vrombaut. An brought the project to me back in 1993 and together we set about developing it for television as a 13 x 11 minute series. We made a successful application for CARTOON preproduction aid and received 40,000 ECUs to make a pilot. The project was the smash hit of the 1994 Forum in the Azores and, as a result, we were able to put together a financial partnership quickly and painlessly. So far, thanks to CARTOON's support, so good. But the production go ahead has to wait for a commission in the UK.

First Catch Your Commission ...

The 1992 Broadcasting Act established the ITV Network Centre, the commissioning organization for the whole of the private sector terrestrial broadcast operation in the UK. The new structure was created by the current Tory administration whose agenda was, and always has been, intensely political. No program can be either commissioned or acquired for the network except through the Network Centre. The commission price is a license fee for which ITV acquires the right to broadcast the program a certain number of times over a certain number of years, but the Centre is financed from a levy on the individual ITV companies and is not in itself a profit-making organization. It is simply a scheduler whose job it is to deliver programs destined to rate well on the network. Ironically, its distance from the real business of television, a deliberate Tory ploy, is now hurting the small production companies, a sector which the same Tory administration has always fervently encouraged.

64 Zoo Lane was offered to the Network Centre in November 1995 and to date we have heard no news, except that it is on a shortlist, the same shortlist where many other good projects have been languishing, some of them for up to two years. The Network Centre, untouched by the need to earn money, is indifferent to the business needs of its clients. We are fortunate in our partners—they have all maintained the same passionate confidence in our project as ourselves and we are certain that *64 Zoo Lane* will be made. But CARTOON can do no more than they have already done. Their benevolent protection was enough to help us push our project out into the world where, let's face it, it may eventually join a European pilot mountain along with butter, milk and the odd seasonal vegetable. I hope not ...

***The Village*, winner of the Cartoon DíOr in 1993, directed by Mark Baker.**

Jill McGreal owns and runs her own London-based animation production company, CODE-NAME The Animation Agency. She produces television series for children and represents many well-known international directors for commercial work. She continues to write and teach about animation and film in general.

Leaving Home

by Linda Simensky

Linda Simensky

No issue on politics would be complete without a nod to the politics we all deal with everyday—at our jobs. And no employment issue is more political than this—leaving your job.

Heraclitus once said, "Everything is in flux," and he certainly could have been referring to the animation industry. As the industry has grown, all sorts of changes and unexpected corporate couplings have happened. One of the unintended consequences of the rapid growth of the animation industry is the rampant job switching that has been going on for the last couple of years. Oddly enough, in all the articles that have been written on jobs in the animation industry, no one has written the article that could be the most useful to much of the industry—"Leaving."

Just to see what information I could find on the topic, I pretended that I was about to change my job, and went to three bookstores in search of a book that could give me some advice. Not advice on how to find a new job, but information on how to go about leaving the old one after I had already gotten the new one. Or how to handle the changes swirling around me. I found nothing, and therefore nothing to use as research for this article, except for personal experience, conversations, and the case studies of others. But upon mentioning job switching around the animation industry, everyone nodded in agreement. It was indeed something we had all been dealing with, either with our own change or with a co-worker's. As if on cue, as I started to write this piece, one of my closest colleagues at the animation studio I work with, changed jobs to go to a competitor. She conveniently became the final case study in my research.

Experiences are a little different between animators and what we can call animation executives (the development, production and network side of the industry), and I am going to discuss them separately.

Then and Now

Changing jobs, while an issue, has not been a big event for most animators, except for those who have been somewhere a long time. Most are used to moving wherever there was work, and leaving when production on a show or film was completed. Everyone knew they would be at a certain studio for a limited time, and then would be on to the next job. Most knew that the idea of being a studio for 50 years was a myth, and that their experience would be much like that of many of the animators of the 1930s and 40s, according to Tom Sito, head of Motion Pictures Screen Cartoonists, Local 839 IATSE, and an animator at DreamWorks. In addition, while the animation companies were competing for work or for shows to be picked up, they were not competing in the same way for artists. There was a feeling that animation was being judged as a genre, not so much studio by studio, and all shows and films depended on the success of all other shows and films. Companies would even collude in terms of salary, and were not glancing around on a regular basis to see whom they could steal.

Companies would even collude in terms of salary, and were not glancing around to see whom they could steal.

But the industry is frenetic now. The recent successes in the industry and high profits derived from animated films, and the pressure to beat previous films, have caused a shift. The additions of DreamWorks, Warner Bros. Feature Animation, and Fox have changed the animation job landscape considerably. Animators right now are experiencing what

successful college football players feel when the NFL comes scouting. And suddenly, the companies that are owned by giant corporations can double the salaries of animators from competing studios, offer giant bonuses, or make other over-the-top moves to staff their studios. Animators, many who worked (or didn't work) through the leaner times in the 1970s and 80s, now have their pick of projects. And their attitude is that animation in the past has been cyclical, so why not make as much money as possible while they can?

So what happens when a team of animators has been working together for a while, and suddenly one leaves to go to the competition? According to one animator, the vibe does get slightly strange, as you become a non-person, and everyone stops talking to you. There is some jealousy, as animators have gotten a little more competitive than they had been in the past. Money, of course, has been the key factor leading both to jealousy and to competition, as well as to other animators inquiring as to how to change jobs. There is also the slight jealousy towards an animator leaving to work on a more desirable project. However, many animators agreed that their experience has been that since they have all ended up working together over and over, most of the friction or jealousy eventually dies down.

What has also improved is that animators used to be penalized for leaving a studio for another project and then trying to return. According to Sito, this practice is much more acceptable now. In a related area, Sito does question, though, what the entry of computer graphics industry will bring to the animation industry. Historically, the computer graphics animators would just quit if they were unhappy with the conditions at particular jobs. Now that they are blending into the animation industry, it could change the industry's dynamic somewhat.

What if you aren't "talent," are not in great demand, and can't animate?

Executive Decisions

While things haven't changed that much for animators, what if you aren't "talent," are not in great demand, and can't animate? The slightly smaller but equally puzzling segment of the industry, animation executives, also remains in flux. At one time, the people in this part of the industry were either owners of studios, or were upstarts in the entertainment industry, starting in children's television en route to the more lucrative jobs in live action. Animators were used to dealing with a different group of executives each year. In the last half of the decade, many have declared their interest in remaining in animation or children's television, and have even had to compete for jobs with former live action executives in certain cases.

Historically, there has probably been more flux in this segment of the industry, but with more animators depending on these people for particular projects, and with more executives assuming their high positions mean they can be the "talent," the executive has gained even more stature in the animation pantheon. If these executives are moving around, allowing their pet projects to be dropped or put in the hands of someone who is disinterested, it can also create havoc. And even stranger is that when an executive leaves, he or she takes the knowledge of the company's "secret plan" with them.

Last year, around this time, it seemed that a game of musical chairs started, and about half of the development executives shifted to other jobs. It was odd at first to see random groups of people from various companies, who were once competitors, suddenly be colleagues. Then it became commonplace.

If you are at all involved in the game of switching jobs, you are one of three people: the person leaving, a person left behind, or a person working in a department where a new person has just been hired. If you are the latter of the categories, not much is involved. You and your colleagues either like the new person or you don't. If you don't, you may end up in one of the first two categories.

What To Do

If you are leaving, you have probably spent a lot of time deciding that you want to leave, searching and interviewing for a job, and quietly sneaking your personal belongings home. It's a difficult position, because you have to make a huge life decision, and then deal with telling your supervisors and your department that you are leaving. Chances are, you have to figure out who else to tell, and how to tell them. The last time I changed jobs, I was in a development position where most of the people I worked with were outside the company. I had to figure out how to let people within

the company know quickly, and how to get in touch with all the people I dealt with who would need to find out from me personally that I was leaving. For advice, I went to someone who had been in a similar situation a year earlier. Everyone still liked her, so I followed her direction to the smallest detail.

You may wonder if you are actually happy, or just too stupid to realize you aren't.

When one leaves a job, everyone tends to be surprised, even when it might have seemed likely that one was going to leave, and that the new job is an obviously better fit. To combat the surprise, I found that the personal notes and letters seemed to help. I also found that letting people I felt were close to me know a day or two in advance helped in two ways—they were not too surprised when the announcement came (and could even tell their colleagues "they already knew") and they were often a great source of advice and support. Around this time, there is a strange feeling, kind of like everything is moving in slow motion, people are acting oddly, and you are having the exact same conversation over and over. Don't worry, though, it ends quickly.

Oddly enough, everyone who discussed leaving with me agreed that while they may have had many revenge fantasies before they left, they didn't have any as they were actually leaving. Perhaps it's the strangeness and the stress of leaving, but it is probably good, since revenge usually is a bad idea. The industry is too small. If you absolutely must experience some form of revenge, my panel of experts suggest that you wait five years, eventually run into the revengee at lunch, say something such as "Wow, sorry to hear about your show..." and then run.

If one of your colleagues is leaving to go to the competition, there are a variety of unsettling reactions you may have. You may feel abandoned, or angry, or you may possibly feel stupid that you are staying. You may wonder if you are actually happy, or just too stupid to realize you aren't. You start to think that maybe you should be job hunting. You may be jealous, thinking "why didn't they ask me?" You are confused because everyone seemed so happy working together a week earlier. Or you are nervous because the person leaving knew everything about what you were working on, and now they have gone to work with the competition. Well, there's not much to say about this other than nearly everyone I talked to who felt "left behind" had these feelings, so they must be "normal." The exception was when people didn't like the person who left, or had a chance at getting a promotion into the job.

No job switching essay would be complete without acknowledging one of the more interesting unexpected side effects of job switching—who keeps in touch with you from your old job. The unexpected people who keep in touch with you often tend to be good at gossiping, or are people who are thinking about switching jobs themselves. They may be people you rarely spoke with at your last job. And good friends from your old job that you thought were friends for life may simply disappear if they are happy at their jobs or feel abandoned by you. Either way, you'll be surprised by who keeps in touch and who doesn't.

It's also amazing to find out what people (especially those who have never met you) have speculated about why you've left. Since you probably can't issue a statement or call a press conference, you just have to live through this part. I have heard some interesting interpretations of why I left my last job. I suggest that if this happens to you, take notes on why you actually did leave, and make plans to write a book.

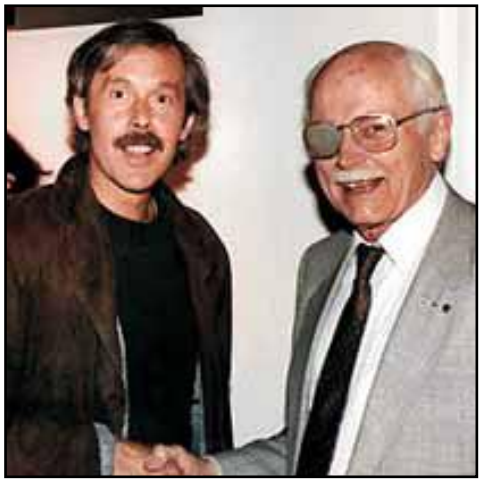
One other aspect of leaving a job is that you now will have former colleagues to run into. Try not to gloat in front of them, as it will probably bother them. This will cause them to tell you stories that will frustrate you in return, reminding you that there is nothing you can do about your last job, except say, "Oh, well."

And when it comes to folk heroes in the leaving department, don't forget, the animation industry will always have the master, Jeffrey Katzenberg ...

Linda Simensky is the Director of Programming at the Cartoon Network and the President of ASIFA-East. She lives in a Delta 727 airplane, and is reachable at linda.simensky@turner.com.

The View From HOLLYWOOD

by Raimund Krumme



Raimund Krumme & Frederic Back at Frede;ric Back Gallery Opening at the Academy of Motion Picture in Beverly Hills

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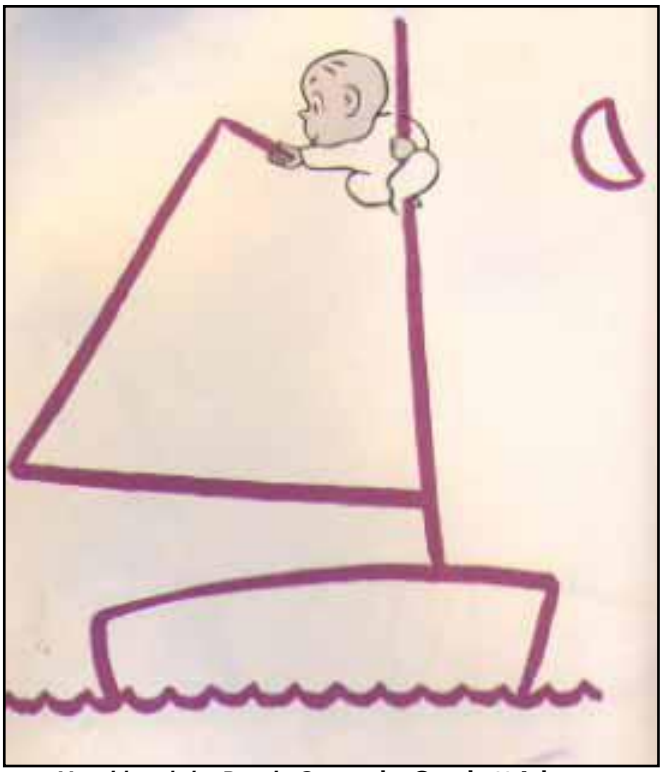
I sit in my air conditioned office, with a view of the Hollywood sign, of which I can only read "wood," as it is partially blocked by a Scientology sign, and I contemplate the strange fate that brought me here. I am working on a Hollywood movie! What do my short minimalist poems have to do with these novellas, which entice all your senses? But perhaps these two worlds are not that different. When people in Europe snub their noses at Hollywood movies, they forget they have picked the subjects here, which are neither funny or glamorous, nor are they heroic epics. There were films made about autistic and handicapped people, about rape and loss of work—and all managed to be successful movies. Also, in animated films we see a different approach to a traditional medium.

He is perplexed that his drawings sometimes turn out to be more complex than expected.

Something New

For the past few months, working on the feature version of Harold and the Purple Crayon, I have gotten to know a cartoon figure who experiences his world, his dreams and fears through his art. He is perplexed by the fact that his simple drawings, sometimes turn out to be more complex than he expected; and the same drawings, looked at from another angle or dimension, are transformed into something new, with different dimensions in another spatial order. Many ideas develop from within the flow of the drawings themselves, a process I am very familiar with. From this point of view, moving from independent short films to this production was not that big a deal. Harold uses his crayon to understand the world around him. Because a simple line-drawing allows diverse interpretations, he makes many new discoveries, and eventually sees himself as being trapped.. It takes another line to change the situation and to free himself.



***Harold and the Purple Crayon* by Crockett Johnson**

I work a little like Harold when I work on a film. Besides having a plot, there is not much written. Things evolve by drawing them. This is where my ideas come from. The simplicity of the drawing lets you concentrate on movement. Because my drawings sometimes only gain meaning through motion, it is possible to change content by adding a new movement. Even an abstract line or geometric form can be changed emotionally by a poetic action, because we recognize certain patterns of motion in our everyday life. It might be this verfrendung (strange point of view) of the well-known pattern, that finds easier access to the heart.

Exploring the possibilities of animation might get one to a point where the medium itself is into dialogue with the story.

Exploring the vast possibilities of animation might get one to a point where the medium itself is into dialogue with the story. We show our tools to the viewers—look this is the paper we draw on, this is the ink, look what's happening if we change the timing ...Combining these levels, we create a new logic, which can be really entertaining, as Tex Avery has shown. I wonder how much of the production process can be included in a film? A figure emerges and we still can feel the presence of the hand that drew it—the aggressive gesture, the mellow, soft movement, or the uncertain scribble.

Design by Raimund Krumme

Communicating Emotions

My figures often come to life like this. Their existence as brush strokes comes randomly, rather than through analysis. The particular movement of the hand communicates emotions in a very direct way. The problem is to get this spontaneous drawing, which includes traces of its creation, into fluent, acceptable animation. It is a contradiction, because you either have to give up all spontaneity, drawing the inbetweens, or you keep it and get a nervous, boiling animation. I once imagined computers could fill this gap. What seems to be a difficult task for the inbetweener or inker might be done with a computer, without loosing the drawings' character. It might be actually easier for the computer to keep a complex texture, like a brush stroke or a crayon drawing than really animating. After all, one still needs a large amount of intuition to move drawings, something a computer lacks.

I ask myself how to keep this human factor, this soul, in a more or less rationalized environment due to the amount of footage we have to produce. The animation process is much more fragmented here, even in this (by American standards) comparatively small-scale production. Ideas are produced by a group of people—writers, storyboard artists, art department. It is a more of a group process, which has to be blessed by the producer, and divvied up into different departments. Not that I don't see the necessity for this procedure, I only hope that I can do as much as possible of the work I think important.

***Got Milk* commercial, directed by Raimund Krumme**
Courtesy of Acme Filmworks

After all, nothing is certain. We might not get into production at all, and all these thoughts might turn out to be nothing more than theoretical contemplation.

Raimunde Krumme is an award-winning German director who is currently working in Hollywood on Sony' Picture's Harold and the Purple Crayon. *He is a founding member of Cartoon—animation branch of the Media Program of the European Union in Brussels.*

Icelandic Animation

by Giannalberto Bendazzi

There is animation in Iceland. This northern island of 103,000 sq. km., the second largest in Europe after Great Britain, 798 km. from Scotland, 970 from Norway, 287 from Greenland, is famous for its volcanoes and geysers as well as its great sagas and skaldic poetry. Up until now, though, it was considered a wasteland as far as frame-by-frame films are concerned; this is mainly the fault of specialists, especially of this particular historian.

Among the filmmakers and producers who have been submitting projects over the last few years to Cartoon (the European Community's program for supporting animation production) there have also been Icelanders. It was then that the discovery was made.

Beginnings

Animation started in Iceland in 1974, about the time when filmmaking in general started there, provoking a certain echo in the specialized press. Icelanders are proportionately the most avid moviegoers in the world; and an average of two live-action features have been made every year. In 1978, the Icelandic Film Fund was established to support production, thus making professional filmmaking a reality there.

The first animated fiction film, which was made in that fateful year, 1974, was The Pioneer, a five-minute black-and-white short by Jon Axel Egilsson. Born in Reykjavik (Iceland's capital) on October 4, 1944, Egilsson studied acting, was a news cameraman and worked on several documentary and fictional films as a cameraman and editor. Later in his career, he also taught animation and filmmaking at the College of Arts and Crafts in Reykjavik.

***The Deacon of Dark River* by Jón Axel Egilsson**
Courtesy of Giannalberto Bendazzi

In describing The Pioneer, he noted that, "The people and sets are made with cubes. No narration, just music. It is the story of a young man, a cube, who on his way to the Promised Land in a sailing ship meets a young woman. Her father is not happy with that. The ship sinks, he is thrown overboard and thinks he is the only survivor. He builds a house and plants trees. One fine day, he meets the girl, who is out walking her dog. She tells him how she survived, and that there are other people from the ship, and that they built a town in the next valley. They get married, but on their wedding night ... (a chapter is missing, 100 feet of film were overexposed in processing). I made the thing entirely on my own. It was premiered in 1974, the year we celebrated the 1100th anniversary of settlement in Iceland."

The second fictional animated short, The Hammer of Thor, was made by Sigurdur "Siggi" Örn Brynjolfsson. It was based on a 12th century Icelandic saga, it was the first cartoon film made in Iceland and the first in color.

Siggi Brynjolfsson was born in Reykjavik on September 19, 1947 and was a professional graphic designer, illustrator and cartoonist. His interest in animation, which began in childhood, was strengthened at art school when he bought a "how to" book by John Halas. In 1970, he was working in an advertising studio as a graphic designer, when a client asked if they could make an animated commercial for

***Stúfur* by Jón Axel Egilsson, Green Door Animation/Cartoon**
Courtesy of Giannalberto Bendazzi

Sigurdur Örn Brynjolfsson with puppets from *Christmas On His Way To Earth* (1994)
Courtesy of Giannalberto Bendazzi

a life insurance company. Siggi jumped at the chance, saying, "Of course! Yes! He then studied his old book all night and the next morning starting making the film, which was 30 seconds long, and shot in 16mm black and white.

After that, he made several more animated commercials, lasting from a few seconds to a minute in length. The director himself recalls that, "One or two commercials had been made before mine, [using] cutouts and animation with objects." As such, we still do not know who actually instigated frame-by-frame filmmaking in this country—a task we will gladly leave to younger researchers.

The third and last professional Icelandic director is a woman, Inga Lisa Middleton, who was born in London on December 9, 1964. She studied and worked in both Iceland and Great Britain, getting degrees in Photography from West Surrey College of Art and Design in Farnham, England, and in Visual Communication from the Royal College of Art in London. Her first short, Mummy, Daddy, Bobby and Debby (1989, cel animation and pixillation) was bought by Britain's Channel 4 and was a parody of the modern nuclear family as seen through advertising.

Besides these three, there are really no full-time animators from Iceland. One reason is that there are only 260,000 Icelanders. Another is that the country lacks both the technical infrastructure and the personnel (e.g., cameramen, inbetweeners and inkers); in fact, it is common to go abroad to complete films made locally. The third and most important reason is that there is no home market for animation in Iceland.

To complete our survey, I would like to summarize the rest of the careers of Egilsson, Brynjolfsson and Middleton.

Jon Axel Egilsson

In 1983, Jon Axel Egilsson made Hands (5 minutes, color, clay animation). "The people's heads are hands," the director wrote, "and the rest of the bodies are snail-like. A man, a right hand, gets his morning paper and a cup of coffee, kisses his wife (a left hand) and goes to work. He gets a smashing idea: all workers should join to make a giant. But the newly-made giant finds a piece of one of the workers in his eye and turns on them. They join again to fight against the monster and change him into a cow, which they can milk. I made this thing entirely on my own, too!"

Six years later, in 1989, he made Jurti (5 minutes, color, cel animation), this time with some backing from the Icelandic Film Fund, with the help of painter Margret Jonsdottir ("at the time, a student of mine at the College of Arts and Crafts"), and music composed by the renowned Hjörtur Howser. "The story is about seasons. First we see a plant growing, then autumn, and next year the birth of Jurti ("Planty"), a little red plant devil. He plays in the branches, but he has to fight a bee. He gets stung, but he survives."

After having supplied Swedish Television with 22 minutes of animated graphics for Living With Violent Earth, a six episode series explaining volcanic activities, Egilsson decided to go on and make a longer and more demanding film. This was The Deacon of Dark River (26 minutes, color, cel animation, 1994). The synopsis states that, "In Hörgardalur Valley, in the northern part of Iceland, was the parish of Dark River. It is said that in bygone days a young deacon served the community here and that he took to meet secretly a young servant girl at the rectory of Baegisa in the next valley. ... On Christmastide 1730 the deacon rode off to Baegisa to invite Gudrun to the season's festivities at

When a client asked if they could make an animated commercial. He said, "Of course!

***The Deacon of Dark River* by Jón Axel Egilsson**
Courtesy of Giannalberto Bendazzi

Dark River, and he promised to come and fetch her on Christmas Eve. However, on his way back, fate dealt him an unexpected blow. Yet, so great was his love for Gudrun that nothing could stop him from keeping his promise."

The film was animated, shot and edited in Latvia, with a huge crew of more than 100 people, while the film itself was processed in Russia and Denmark. The music, based on old Icelandic tunes and melodies, was composed by Hjörtur Howser (again) and Hilmar Örn Hilmarsson. When it was finished, it was aired on both Icelandic and Swedish television.

The workers join to fight against the monster and change him into a cow, which they can milk.

Jon Axel Egilsson is now working on Stufur (Stump), a projected feature film. "The idea," he says, "is from two old Icelandic fairy tales mixed in one, plus a story line of my own. It's full of action, comedy and good examples of how to behave and what to learn. I have various letters of intent, but when I try to get financing abroad for a pilot, everything always ends in a Catch 22 situation. They say, 'I'm interested in financing your film—but first I have to see a pilot.' And I'm asking for money for the pilot!"

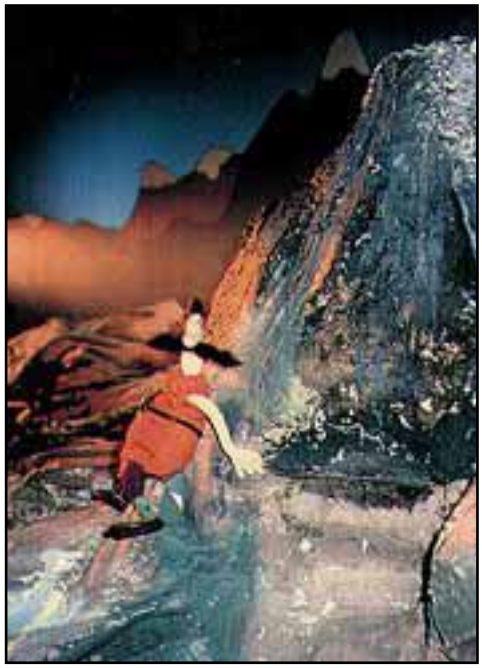
***Stúfur* by Jón Axel Egilsson, Green Door Animation/Cartoon**
Courtesy of Giannalberto Bendazzi

Siggi Brynjolfsson

Örn "Siggi" Brynjolfsson, after The Hammer of Thor, started his international career creating, under the aegis of the Swedish Film Institute (Lisabeth Gabrielsson, producer), It Takes All Kinds (cel animation, 1987), a miniseries of three one-minute films based on his own cartoons. The Institute, with the collaboration of the Icelandic Film Fund and the Nordic Film and TV Fund, produced his next short, Our Christmas Tree (8 minutes, cel animation, 1991). Inking, painting and filming were done in Kecskemet, Hungary.

In Audun and the Polar Bear (11 minutes, 1993), which was made in Vilnius, Lithuania, Siggi, for the first time, did not animate and concentrated instead on directing—the animation itself was done by the young and talented Algimantas Taujanskas. The film tells a story taken from an old saga: Audun is a poor Icelandic Viking who wants to pay his respects to King Sveinn of Denmark in a grand way. He thus sails to Greenland, where he spends all he's got to buy a polar bear to bring as a gift to the Danish monarch. We then follow Audun's adventures in Norway, Denmark, Rome and then again in his homeland, a much richer man than when he left.

This film was a turning point in Brynjolfsson's career. First, he learned that it was too difficult to live in one country and make a film in another. This was demonstrated by the "polar bear's shit incident." As Siggi recalled, "I was back home in Iceland. One Saturday afternoon, I got a phone call from the studio in Vilnius, Lithuania. They had been trying all day to phone (at that time, all communication was very difficult)



***Hreidar The Stupid* by Sigurdur Örn Brynjolfsson (1996)**
Courtesy of Giannalberto Bendazzi

as they had a problem. As the designer of the film, I had chosen all the colors, and marked them on the layouts. One of the main characters in the film is this polar bear, and in one scene he leaves a pile of shit on the grass. What is the color of polar bear shit? I had forgotten to mark it on the layout! I kept silent for a second and then shouted, 'How the hell should I know. Don't you have a zoo in Vilnius? Go there and check!' But seriously, this was a small problem I could have solved in 20 seconds on the spot; but what about serious problems?" Thus, at the end of 1993, he moved to Tallinn, Estonia, where he established a small production company, Siggi Animastudio.

His second discovery was puppet animation, which is very popular in all the Baltic countries. "I found it very interesting," Brynjolfsson says, "and very different from drawn animation. Think of the three-dimensional possibilities and you can improvise during shooting."

In 1994, he finished Christmas on

His Way to Earth, a 24 x 6-8 minute series that told a Yuletide tale that began running daily on December 1 for 24 days on RUN-TV, Icelandic national television. It was almost a record: in 9 months, Brynjolfsson and his crew filmed and edited 2-1/2 hours of puppet animation.

His next project, *Hreidar the Stupid,* was his most ambitious. Twenty minutes of inventive puppet animation, it was finished in January 1996. The story, taken from an Icelandic saga, tells of the adventures in Norway of Hreidar, a "big, ugly and slowwitted" Icelander. Hreidar wants to meet King Magnus, whom he impresses with his enormous strength and candid behavior; then he has a fight with a soldier of another king, Harald, and kills him. Trying to win Harald's heart, Hreidar discovers he can be a great smith, makes a golden money box and offers it to the king. He does not succeed with him, but King Magnus still likes him, gives him money and sends him back to his island.

We must eventually mention that, during his last year as teacher at the Icelandic Institute of Arts and Crafts (1993), Brynjolfsson had his students make some one-minute graduation films.

***A Fairytale of Our Time* by Inga Lisa Middleton (1992)**
Courtesy of Giannalberto Bendazzi

***The Gods Are Fed Up* by Inga Lisa Middleton (1991)**
Courtesy of Giannalberto Bendazzi

Commenting on his career, Siggi states that, "I came into the field of animation as a graphic designer, cartoonist, painter and illustrator. So, all the visual things were easy for me. When I was making my short films, they were somehow, to me, only my cartoons or drawings moving with sound. It took 15 years to learn to become a film director. Now, with my last two films, I can [finally] call myself a director."

It was too difficult to live in one country and make a film in another.

Inga Lisa Middleton

Inga Lisa Middleton is a Jack-of-all-trades of the performing visual arts. After her first animated film, she made documentaries and live-action shorts, as well as doing more animation; she worked as a still photographer and script continuity girl on feature films; was assistant director on TV plays; director of the music video for the musical *Hair;* and an art director in advertising.

As far as animation is concerned, in 1991, she was the author of *The Gods Are Fed Up* (cel animation and pixillation), a short which dealt with environmental problems seen from a mythological point of view, and above all of *A Fairy Tale of Our Time* (1992, 10 minutes). This original film "in the form of a fairy tale describes where the Princess calls upon her hero to slay the modern day dragon. The film is unusual in the way it portrays ecological issues in a highly artistic way. An unconventional technique has been used, where photographs of actors and backgrounds have been cut out and stuck down onto cels, which then have been filmed under the rostrum camera. Finally, another separate color layer was filmed and the two films married together into one, for a more atmospheric and textured effect." *A Fairy Tale of Our Time* has no dialogue, only sound effects and the music of the outstanding (and above-mentioned) Icelandic composer Hilmar Örn Hilmarsson. It was screened at over 40 festivals and won 3 awards.

Among Middleton's works in progress, two are animated: the documentary live-action/animated *The Violinmaker,* about the Icelandic violinmaker Hans Johansson; and *A Butterfly's Dream,* (10 x 5 minute series), a collection of fictitious fables based Taoist philosophy.

Giannalberto Bendazzi is a Milan-based film historian and critic whose history of animation, Cartoons: One Hundred Years of Cinema Animation, *is published in the US by Indiana University Press and in the UK by John Libbey. His other books on animation include* Topoline e poi *(1978),* Due voite l'oceana *(1983) and* Il movimento creato *(1993, with Guido Michelone).*

DESERT ISLAND SERIES

The Pragmatic Voice of Kibitzing?!?

compiled by Frankie Kowalski

You wouldn't think that in an industry as wacky and creative as animation, the word "politics" would come up in conversation. I had a chance to talk with several animation types who have been involved with politics on and/or off the job: Tom Sito, DreamWorks animator and President of the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Union (Local 839 IATSE), June Foray, famed voice talent who instigated the famous nationwide meat boycott in the US back in 1973, and Bob Basler, President of Europe's CARTOON project.

Tom Sito's top 10 picks...

"I never set out to become a labor leader, just being a good animator was plenty for me. Now that I've been prez for awhile I'm flattered by the trust other artists place in me—and by the knowledge that I'm following in the footsteps of great animators who also fought for artists' rights like Chuck Jones, Art Babbit and Bill Melendez. My proudest moment was a little comment made to me while kibitzing with a top animator on Space Jam. As I was walking away he said: "Yo, Tom, keep taking care of us."

1. *Northwest Hounded Police* by Tex Avery
2. *The Great Piggyback Robbery* by Bob Clampett
3. *The Man Who Planted Trees* by Frédéric Back
4. "Night on Bald Mountain" from *Fantasia* by Walt Disney
5. *Stimpy's Invention* by John K.
6. *One Froggy Evening* by Chuck Jones
7. *The Good Fight,* a documentary about radical volunteers in the Spanish Civil War by Noel Buckner
8. *The Duelists* by Ridley Scott
9. *The Civil War* by Ken Burns
10. *The Meditations* by Marcus Aurelius Antoninus

June Foray's...

"Having been chairman of the Short Films branch, current chair of the Student Academy Awards at the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences and attending animation Festivals from Zagreb, Annecy, London, Hiroshima to points in between, I've viewed thousands of films. How could I possibly select only 10? Heaven help me, I've tried. A couple were easy, forgive me, 'cuz I'm in them. I'd hate to be stranded on a desert island, unless it were Hawaii, but I'd certainly enjoy seeing these films over and over until rescued".

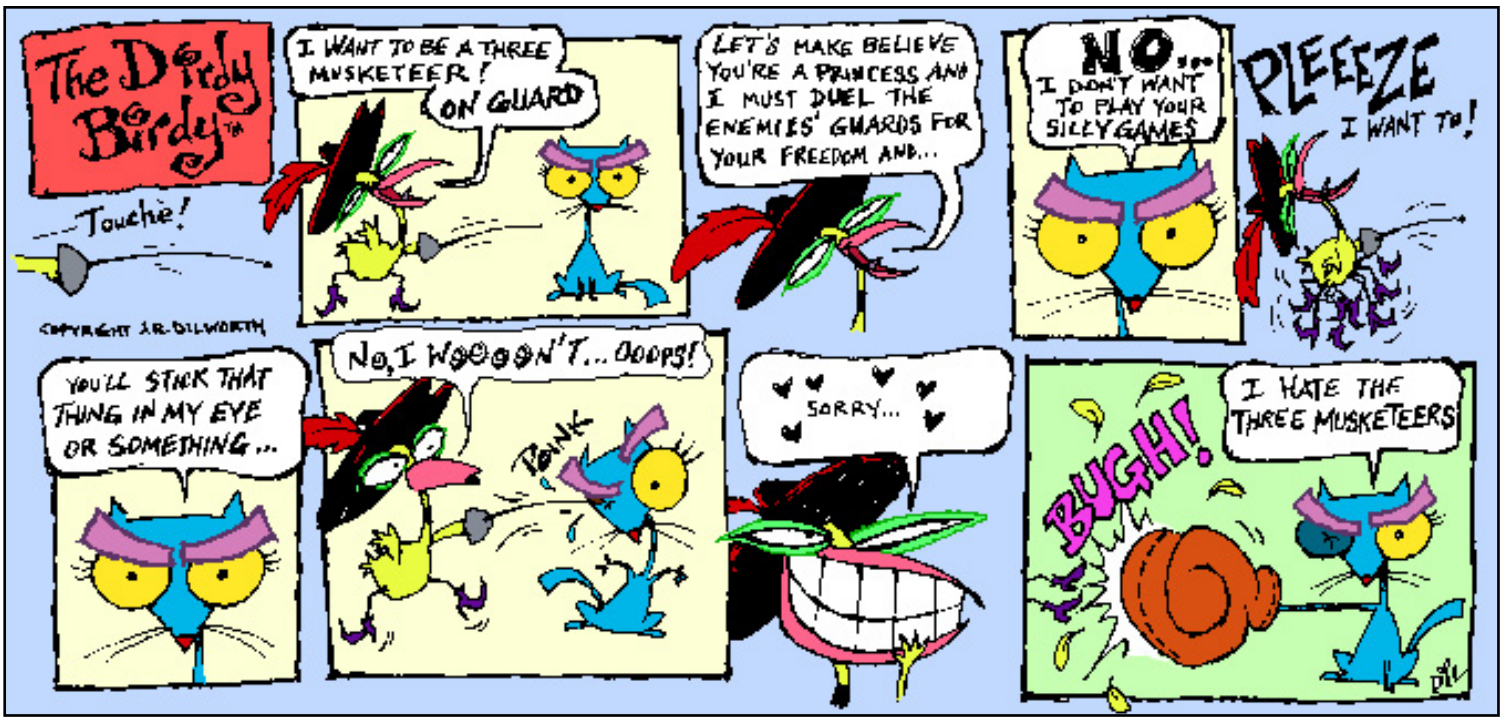
1. *The Mighty River* by Frédéric Back
2. *Rocky and Bullwinkle* by Jay Ward/Bill Scott
3. *Creature Comforts* by Nick Park
4. *One Froggy Evening* by Chuck Jones
5. *Bad Luck Blackie* by Tex Avery
6. *How The Grinch Stole Christmas* by Chuck Jones
7. *George and Rosemary?* National Film Board of Canada
8. *Georgia* by Jimmy Picker
9. *What's Opera Doc?* by Chuck Jones
10. *The Man Who Planted Trees* by Frédéric Back

Bob E. Basler picks...

"After leaving Hollywood in 1959, I worked in animation studios in Denmark, helped set up and teach animation in Finland, and since have been working in Madrid, Spain, and in my own studio, Pegbar Productions, in Barcelona, producing and directing film for Spain, Europe and the U.S. (The Lion, The Witch, The Wardrobe, Peanuts, Fang Face etc.). During that time I also worked in London, co-directing The Yellow Submarine and the Jackson 5 TV series. I recently closed the studio in Barcelona, and just returned from two months in Cairo, doing consulting work for several animation and computer graphics companies. Politically, I was vice president of ASIFA for many years, and for the past eight years I have been president of CARTOON, the animation section of the European Community MEDIA program".

1. All of Frédéric Back's films (*Crac!*, *The Man Who Planted Trees*)
2. *Pinocchio* by Walt Disney
3. *Tale of Tales* by Yuri Norstein
4. *The Black Dog* and *Cafe Bar* by Alison Devere
5. All of Norman McLaren films
6. A group of classic MGM shorts
7. A grou of classic Warner Bros. shorts
8. A group of Aardman Animations films
9. A group of Canadian Film Board films
10. *The Yellow Submarine* and a selection of films I have made so that I can remember the wonderful people with whom I have worked and relive some of those special experiences!

AWN Comics


The Dirdy Birdy
Touche!
I WANT TO BE A THREE MUSKETEER!
ON GUARD
LET'S MAKE BELIEVE YOU'RE A PRINCESS AND I MUST DUEL THE ENEMIES' GUARDS FOR YOUR FREEDOM AND...
NO... I DON'T WANT TO PLAY YOUR SILLY GAMES
PLEEEZE I WANT TO!
COPYRIGHT J.R. DILWORTH
YOU'LL STICK THAT THING IN MY EYE OR SOMETHING...
NO, I WOOOON'T... OOOPS!
PONK
SORRY...
BUGH!
I HATE THE THREE MUSKETEERS

The Dirdy Birdy by John R. Dilworth

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NEWS

Latest Productions of Atelier Graphoui. *The Brussels-based Graphoui Workshop, which provides opportunities for young filmmakers to direct their first films in a professional environment, have announced the release of three new productions: Carnet noir (Black Notebook), by Benjamin Ntabundi, Michel Castelain and Jacques Faton, a stop-motion work using photos and clay, deals with an artist's escape from Burundi in the wake of a coup d'etat in 1993; Studeni 1992 Sarajevo (November 1992 Sarajevo), by Stjepan Mihaljevica, a Croatian artist who tells the story of his father's last day going through the streets of Sarajevo in order to get supplies for his family; and Michel Rutsaert and Alex Mortelmans' Cave Canem, is a fable about a town at the edge of the desert, whose people are dedicated to worshipping the moon. Atelier Graphoui can be reached at 11 rue de la Rhétorique, 1060 Brussels, Belgium. Telephone : (32.2) 537 23 74; fax : (32.2) 537 27 67.*

Disney TV Hikes Hume. *Walt Disney Television Animation has promoted Lenora Hume to senior vice president of international production. In her new job, Hume will continue to oversee production operations for Disney animation studios in Sydney and Tokyo, and the new Canadian studio with facilities in Vancouver and Toronto.*

New Facets Whole Toon Catalog Now Available. *The eight-year-old catalog of videos,*

laser discs, and books for animation fans founded by Seattle's Doug Ranny has found a new home at Chicago's Facets Multi-Media, who offers a collection of over 27,000 foreign, classic American, silent, documentary, fine arts and animation videos. Copies of the "Whole Toon Catalog #12" are available free by calling Facets at 1-800-331-6197.

The following items are from AWN's September 7, 1996 email News Flash:

MTV Networks To Invest Over $420 Million In Animation. *Making a major commitment to animation, MTV Networks, a unit of Viacom Inc., which includes MTV and Nickelodeon, will invest more than $420 million in original animation over the next five years. This will include television series, feature films, interstitials and other animated product. In all, MTV Networks plan to produce more than 850 half-hours animated episodes. This will be accompanied by a major expansion of Nickelodeon's Nicktoons Animation in Los Angeles and MTV Animation's New York facility.*

To meet its goals, the company announced the formation of a joint animation council which will oversee production, operations and talent development. The council will be comprised of Abby Terkuhle, Executive Vice President, Creative Director, MTV; Albie Hecht, Senior Vice President, Nick Productions; Mary Harrington, Vice President Animation, Nickelodeon; and John Andrews, Vice President Animation, MTV. The Council will work to coordinate the two studios and offer animators the opportunity to work on "a broader range of projects than most studios." Although both studios will maintain their independent activities, there will be a focus on broadening the opportunities of talent and the exchange of ideas.

Nickelodeon also announced the introduction of two new original series and 26 new episodes of Rugrats. Among their new offerings is Blues Clues a computer animated/live-action series and KABLAM!, an animated sketch comedy, hosted by Henry and June.

Fox Family Makes *Tick* Feature. *Fox Family Films has just signed a deal for a animated feature based on Ben Edlund's comic book character, The Tick. The character first came to animated prominence as an as part of Fox's Saturday morning line up and is scheduled to also appear on Comedy Central. The project is being scripted as a*

feature, but may not be produced out of Fox's Phoenix-based animation studio, since *The Tick*'s look and style are different from more traditional studio-animated musical fare.

Society For Animation Studies Conference To Be Held In Wisconsin. The 8th annual conclave of the international membership organization of scholars and filmmakers will be hosted this year by the University of Wisconsin-Madison, September 25-29, 1996. The event will focus on "Japanese Animation And Global Media," featuring papers by academics and independent scholars from around the world, supplemented by screenings Japanese films, a program entitled "Et tu, Popeye," New Material From/About the Ub Iwerks Studio, a James Whitney Retrospective and *R-1, Ein Formspiel*, a newly restored three-screen work by Oscar Fischinger.

The conference is being organized by Donald Crafton, author of *Before Mickey*, and features a number of papers on Japanese animation, including David Desser's "Why Anime?" and Rei Okamoto's "Ideological Representation and Cultural Myths in a Japanese Wartime Animated Film, *Momotaro—Divine Troops of the Ocean*, as well as several panels on animation technology, John Lent's "Korean Animation: The Boom Years" and Sybil DelGaudio's *What Did You Do in the War, Daddy?* Animation and World War II Training Films." For more information, check out the SAS Web site on AWN (http://www.awn.com/sas/conference.html), or contact:

SAS Conference Committee
c/o Donald Crafton
Communication Arts Department, Vilas Hall
821 University Avenue
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706 USA
Phone 608/262-2417 or 608/833-2279
Email crafton@macc.wisc.edu

Lyricist Zippel Joins Disney Team. Tony Award winning David Zippel (*City of Angels*) has signed to work on the next three Disney features—*Hercules*, *The Legend of Mulan* and *Tarzan*. Zippel will collaborate with different composers on each of these animated projects. Alan Menken will write the music and score for *Hercules*, Matthew Wilder will provide the melodies for *Mulan* and Phil Collins will compose the songs for *Tarzan*.

Activision Unveils Internet Gaming Capabilities With *Mechwarrior 2: Mercenaries*. Activision has developed proprietary Internet drivers which will be built into its upcoming combat-simulation game *MechWarrior 2: Mercenaries*. The connectivity tool allows players to host their own multiplayer online networks for free by connecting to their Internet service provider and launching the game. It will be available this month in the US at a suggested retail price of $49.95.

Activision also signed a deal with Australis Microprogramming, Ltd., an Australian game developer, to acquire the worldwide rights to a new real-time action strategy game. As part of the relationship, Activision will work closely with Australis on the science fiction strategy game's final development. Activision will also supervise the title's artistic direction and "optimize its unique features."

Prrfect Animation Creates Animated Id For Mtv-Asia Using Traditional Chinese Papercut And Imagery. Prrfect Animation, a studio with offices in San Francisco and Shanghai, attempted to achieve an authentic Asian feel for the MTV ID by using an all-Chinese team that included the studio's senior Chinese director—a specialist in the art of paper cutout animation.

In other related news, Prrfect Animation has recently completed the animation for a Barbie CD-ROM, apparently the . This is the first time Barbie has been animated in cartoon form.

Brøderbund Introduces The New Storyquests Line Of Children's Adventures. *Gregory and the Hot Air Balloon* and *Darby the Dragon*, developed in partnership with Capitol Multimedia, are the latest in the StoryQuests series which allows children 4-8 to take on challenging adventures through "enchanted worlds," while helping them learn such skills, such as logical reasoning, problem solving and letter recognition. It is available on Windows and Macintosh hybrid CD-ROM format for approximately $30.00.

Brøderbund is also presenting the new ImagiMaker Series, a software package that offers a new line of painting (*Kid Pix*); drawing (*Kid Pix Studio*); animating (*Orly's Draw-A-Story*), and creative writing (*The Amazing Writing Machine*) programs for kids 3-12. The drawing, painting and animating programs have been introduced in over 10 different languages. The *Kid Pix*

franchise started almost five years ago, while Orly's Draw-A-Story is coming to stores in January 1997.

Early Bow For Mexican *Toy Story* Video. *Facing the video privacy problem south of the border, Buena Vista Home Entertainment has scheduled the Mexican video release of Toy Story more than four weeks ahead of its US debut. Typically, once Spanish-language versions of Disney features are released for the Hispanic market, pirates use the videos as masters for high-volume copying directed at the Mexican market. During the past 18 months of economic recession, piracy has reached record levels in Mexico. Leading retailer Videovisa reckons 55% of cassettes in circulation here are pirated copies. Already, low-quality copies of Toy Story, taped in cinemas during the film's spring theatrical run, are available on street corners for $3 or $4. The legitimate cassettes will retail in Mexico for $10 to $13.*

***Ghost In The Shell* Achieves Mainstream Success.** *The sci-fi thriller, one of the few Japanese animated movies to make a sustained presence on the home video sell through charts in the US, recently vaulted to #1 on the "Billboard Top Video Sales" chart.*

The following items are from AWN's September 21, 1996 email News Flash

Emmy Award Winners And Cable Ace Nominees Announced: *Emmys were awarded by the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences for A Pinky and The Brain Christmas Special (Warner Bros. Television Animation/Amblin) for best Animated Program (for programming one hour or less), Shakespeare: The Animated Tales: The Winter's Tale (HBO) in the Animation category, and Caroline in the City (Barron-Pennette Productions) for Graphic Design And Title Sequence.*

In related news, Cable Ace nominees were announced on September 11: For Animated Programming Special or Series: The Chicken From Outerspace (Cartoon Network/Hanna-Barbera), Dr. Katz: Professional Therapist (HBO Downtown Productions), Duckman (Klasky Csupo), Ren & Stimpy (Nickelodeon) and Rocko's Modern Life (Nickelodeon/Games Animation); International Children's Programming Special Or Series: The Neverending Story (Nelvana) and Mole's Christmas (Disney Channel); and for Writing A Children's Special Or Series, Sue Radley for The Adventures of Mole.

Celluloid Briefs, The First Brisbane Animation Festival. *A new film tradition will be born in Brisbane October 5-6 1996 when the First Brisbane Animation Festival hits the big screen at Schonell Theatre, at the University of Queensland. "Celluloid Briefs" will feature otherwise inaccessible local and international films, including some new releases and some old favorites. Amongst the smorgasbord of shorts on offer are British and European animations, as well as specialty programmes from Eat Carpet and Cinematheque, an international film organization famed for promoting "rare and unrated films."*

The Festival will consist of five main components, featuring programs from guest curators who will attend as special festival guests: Clare Kitson (Commissioning Editor, Channel 4, UK), Joy Toma (Executive Producer, Eat Carpet, SBS Television), Dina Browne (Coordinator, Festival of Television for Australian Children) and Amanda Duthie (Producer, Babble-On, SBS Television). It will showcase animation from around the globe, featuring a range of styles, techniques and themes. The programs include: Children's Animation, The Best of World Animation ,Eat Carpet, The Best of British Cinematheque and The Cartoon Mirror.

The event is being held in conjunction with Animation in Australia: Future Directions, a two-day Conference hosted by the university's Animation Department, and will focus on the animator-practitioner and is geared towards those who would influence the nature of Australia's animating future.

Mar Attacks! In 3-D. *Warner Bros. is hoping to get attention of souvenir shoppers at its New York City Studio Store with Marvin the Martin in the 3rd Dimension. The 12-minute animated 3-D film, which feature classic Looney Tune characters, was completed by Warner Bros. Classic Animation in a 5 perf-70mm, 24 frame-per-second format for twin projection on a 50-foot-wide screen. The film will debut at Warner's 5th Avenue Studio Store next month as part of a major expansion of the flagship shop.*

In other Warner Bros.-related news, it was announced that Space Jam due in theaters November 15, will not only have Michael Jordan, but also an all-star soundtrack from Warner

Sunset/Atlantic. The album will feature such artists as Seal and Coolio as well as R. Kelly, Naughty By Nature, Quad City DJs and Monica. Producers David Foster, Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis. One of the soundtrack's cuts will be a remake of Cheech and Chong's *Basketball Jones*, performed by Barry White and comic Chris Rock.

Riley To Lead Canada's Teletoon. *Teletoon, the newly licensed Canadian 24-hour animation channel that plans to launch in September 1997, announced the appointment of John Riley as president. Riley comes from the Canadian-based Family Channel, one of the partners in Teletoon, where he was vice president of business affairs and helped put together the application for the new cable service.*

Curious Pictures Opens West Coast Office. *The New York-based animation/effects house has opened a West Coast office in San Francisco. It is staffed by executive producer Anne Smith (formerly at Colossal Pictures), and former Colossal animators/directors Robert Valley and Denis Morella. Smith, who worked for MTV as well as The Ink Tank, joined Colossal in 1991. Her production credits include spots for Nike, Intel and Celestial Seasonings.*

Alexis Wallrich Promoted To Executive Vice President At Shanghai Morning Sun Animation (Usa) Co. *Wallrich will continue to oversee all operations, including business affairs, development and production, at the US office of the largest foreign-owned animation studio in China. Shanghai Morning Sun animates shows such as Life With Louie, as well as the upcoming Brave Little Toaster Goes to Mars and The Fantastic Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor.*

David Lane Joins Will Vinton Studios. *London-based director David Lane has signed a seven year agreement with Portland, Oregon-based Vinton. Lane specializes in effects-oriented live action work, ranging from second-unit directing ("Superman", "Muppets' Treasure Island") to the CGI dancing cars and gas pumps of his Shell campaign done out of Savoy in 1994.*

Summit Media Gets In Toon With *Oscar's Orchestra*. *The syndication and media buying unit of 4Kids Entertainment, debuts Oscar's Orchestra starring Dudley Moore as the voice of "Oscar", the Grand Piano, and features other characters based on the instruments of the orchestra to introduce young people to classical music. Thirteen half-hours are slated for this fall, with an additional 13 now in production for the 1997-98 season.*

In related news, Britain's Tony Collingwood Productions, which is producing Oscar's Orchestra has moved into a new $2 million animation studio in London which can send and receive animation "via digitilization."

Maxis' Announces Interactive Holiday Releases. *Maxis known for its SimCity games, will release seven new titles in time for the holidays: SimCopter, SimGolf, SimPark, SimTunes, Marty's in Where's Morgan, Full Tilt and The Crystal Skull.*

***Hunchback* To Speak Catalan.** *The government of the Spanish region of Catalonia will foot the entire $104,000 bill for dubbing The Hunchback of Notre Dame into Catalan, according to Buena Vista International Spain. Catalan is the official language of Catalonia, whose capital Barcelona hosted the 1992 Olympics. Some 10.3 million people live in the region, although most only speak it as a second language. But, the local government wants to subsidize any undertaking that promotes the language.*

Disney Channel Turning To Universal. *The Disney Channel has licensed the Universal/Amblin Entertainment animated feature library to help fill its new nightly schedule of family films at 7:00 p.m. Titles in the package include The Land Before Time, An American Tail and its sequel An American Tail: Fievel Goes West, as well as We're Back! A Dinosaur's Story and Balto.*

Sundance Channel Focus On Independent Films To Include Animation. *Following the creative vision of Robert Redford, founder of the Sundance Institute and the Sundance Film Festival, the new US cable outlet is claiming to hew to a film festival format in its programming. Thus, in addition to its slate of independent features and shorts, it promises to offer anywhere from 2-5 animated programs monthly. So far, the channel has offered such frame-by-frame titles as Bob's Birthday, Special Delivery, A Small Domain, Blackfly, Sleepy Guy, Nocturna Artificialia, and Gas Planet. In October, it will also show Crumb, the award-winning documentary about underground comic hero Robert Crumb (Keep On Truckin, Fritz the Cat).*

Animation World Magazine 1996–97 Calendar

November Issue Highlights

It's the craze that's uniting people worldwide—Theme Park Animation! We'll talk to Bob Rogers & Company, known for such rides as The Magic of Disney Animation at MGM Studios/Florida and Mystery Lodge at Knott's Berry Farms/California. Also, Robin Allan will chronicle the various European influences on Disneyland, including Copenhagen's Tivolli Gardens.

On the Festival circuit, we'll review Ottawa 96, which is celebrating it's 20th Anniversary, as well as a profile of this year's Honorary President Lousie Beaudet, curator of animation at Montreal's Cinémathèque Québecoise. We will also bring news from down under from the first ever Brisbane Animation Festival, and a report from the 8th annual Society for Animation Studies Conference at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Interactive Animation	*(December '96)*
Animation Festivals	*(January '97)*
International Animation Industry	*(February '97)*
Children & Animation	*(March '97)*